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HOPE PRESERVED:

The Story of New Hope Presbyterian Church

Brian D. Weger



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*The Story of New Hope
Presbyterian Church*

Brian D. Weger



Dr. Brian D. Weger, who was born in Baltimore, Maryland, is married to the former Judith Hendry. The Wegers have two children: Brian Daniel, age 14 and Rebecca Caroline, age 10.

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His denominational service includes the following pastorates: Pike-Rocky Point Presbyterian Church, 1979-1982, Rocky Point, North Carolina; Oak Island Presbyterian Church, 1982-1989, Long Beach, North Carolina; and New Hope Presbyterian Church, 1989-present, Gastonia, North Carolina. He was ordained and installed at Pike-Rocky Point Church on October 21, 1979. As a member of Wilmington Presbytery, he served as Moderator of Presbytery in 1983.

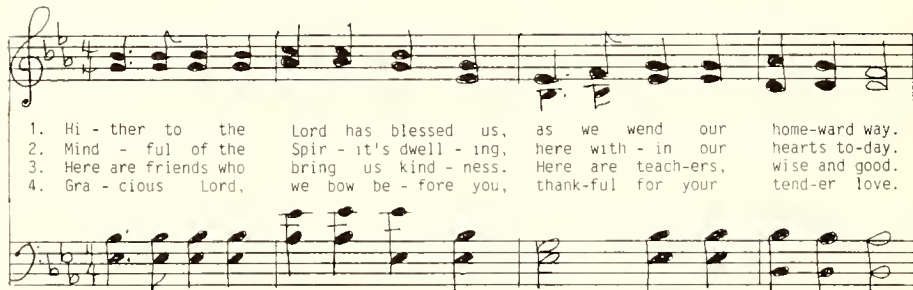
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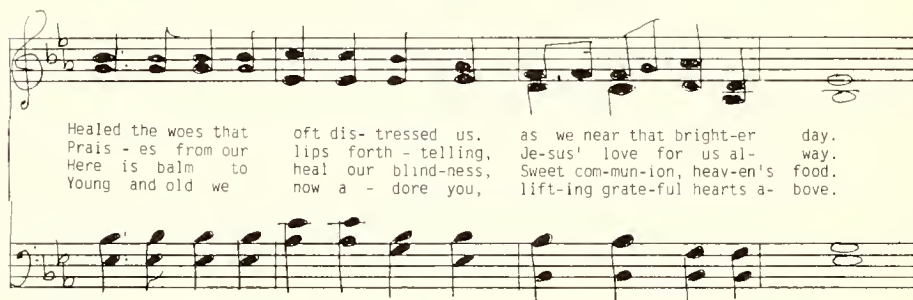
ANNIVERSARY HYMN

Alma Brong, 1992

Beverly J. Lineberger, 1992

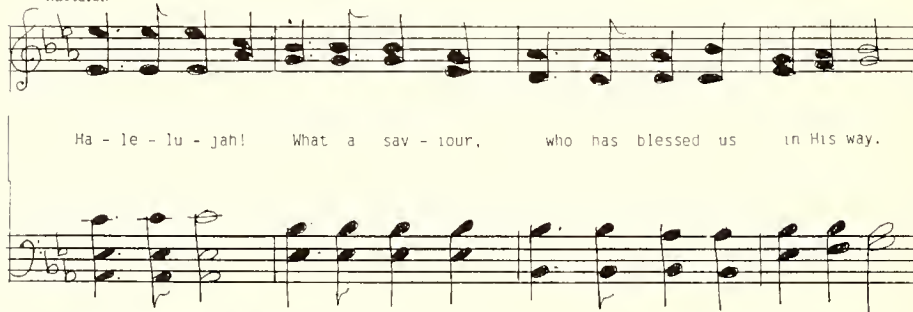


1. Hi - ther to the Lord has blessed us, as we wend our home-ward way.
 2. Mind - ful of the Spir - it's dwell - ing, here with - in our hearts to-day.
 3. Here are friends who bring us kind - ness. Here are teach-ers, wise and good.
 4. Gra - cious Lord, we bow be - fore you, thank-ful for your tend-er love.

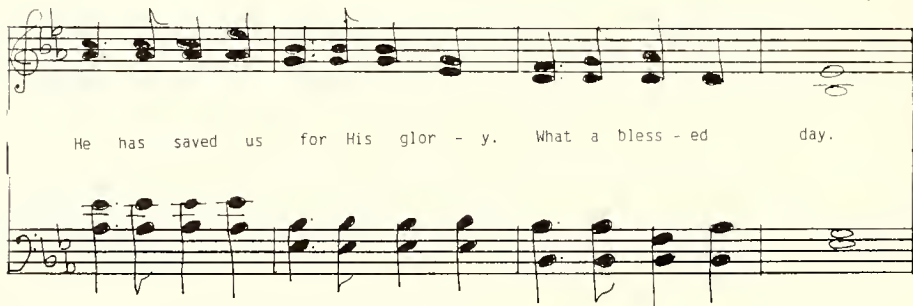


Healed the woes that oft dis-tressed us, as we near that bright-er day.
 Prais - es from our lips forth - telling, Je-sus' love for us al- way.
 Here is balm to heal our blind-ness, Sweet com-mun-ion, heav-en's food.
 Young and old we now a - dore you, lift-ing grate-ful hearts a- bove.

REFRAIN



Ha - le - lu - jah! What a sav - iour, who has blessed us in His way.



He has saved us for His glor - y. What a bless - ed day.

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH'S STORY

Angry words threatened New Hope's harmony. A controversial business deal between Deacons John Neely Dickson and Franklin W. Leeper embroiled the church and Session in a judicial case that lasted more than a year. The Session was called on to adjudicate the clash which reached into the very heart of the congregation. Repeated charges and countercharges ate away at the very unity of the church.¹

Sometime in March, 1904 on the road near Elmore's cotton gin, Leeper and Dickson got into a heated argument. Disagreement over timber cutting and a sawmill contract divided the two men.²

Leeper complained to the Session. Elder J. Logan Stowe was sent to mediate the dispute. Stowe achieved no satisfactory solution. The Session asked the pastor, John Brice Cochran, to try to reconcile the two parties. Dickson admitted harsh words, but said Leeper was going to his customers and questioning his integrity. Further, Dickson complained Leeper had made the accusations to his wife in her "delicate condition." Leeper confessed he had spoken to Dickson's wife, but not in passion. He also admitted he had written and spoken to Dickson's customers. Both men, according to the pastor, J. B. Cochran, remained unwilling to go to each other to resolve the problem.³ The matter remained in limbo for more than a month.

A second time Leeper went to the Session demanding an apology from Dickson. Once more, the Session asked the pastor to try to arrange a meeting between the two men. Neither man was willing to meet the other. However, Dickson agreed to sign a paper stating that he regretted his angry words. The paper was read to the Session. Leeper and Dickson indicated that they were

satisfied with the arrangement. The conflict seemed resolved, finally.⁴

Only Leeper refused to let the disagreement rest. Leeper kept complaining Dickson was still wrong, that he should be stripped of his office in the church, and that he should possibly be denied church membership. Dickson contended he'd already apologized and asked what more he could do. The Session tried everything to appease Leeper, but nothing sufficed. Finally, at Leeper's insistence, the Session had to call for a trial.⁵

On June 26, 1904, the Session of the New Hope Presbyterian Church set a judicial trial for John Neely Dickson accused by Franklin W. Leeper of "breaking a contractual taking of things unlawfully from F. W. Leeper in a business transaction."⁶ The trial began on July 8, 1904. Leeper's indictment was read and Dickson denied the charges.⁷

The trial proceeded. Both sides called witnesses. The Session heard the evidence. After Dickson and Leeper had rested their cases, the Session retired to render a verdict.⁸

New Hope's Session reached a unanimous consensus. In a move typical of the times, the Session had the judgment read from the church's pulpit by pastor J. B. Cochran. The Session said: 1)that the charges were not proved by Leeper, 2)that Dickson used unchristian language, but had given penitence and that it was "full and satisfactory," 3)that Leeper had given "provocation for the unkind words," 4)that there was no evidence of Dickson's dishonesty and he had actually lost money on the contract, 5)that no second contract was proved to exist as valid, and 6)that the cedars were cut by special agreement. The Session concluded that Dickson was wronged by Leeper and that Leeper owed God, the Church, and Dickson an apology.⁹ At last, the matter seemed closed.

On Christmas day in 1904, Dickson, in a stunning

turn of events, resurrected the case. Dickson asked the Session to compel Leeper to make concessions. With the renewed pressure applied by Dickson, the matter dragged out for another six months.¹⁰

On June 1, 1905, the Session adopted a definitive position. The Session concluded that there had been no change of opinion between the two men. Further, the Session said that it was logical for Leeper to apologize to Dickson, but short of suspending Leeper, the Session could do no more. In light of Leeper's declining health, the Session felt further action would be detrimental to his condition. The Session suggested Leeper make reasonable concessions and Dickson drop the case since he was "fully vindicated."¹¹ Pastor J. B. Cochran read the Session's decision from the pulpit. Lastly, the pastor took the paper to Leeper to sign and he refused. Leeper was unwilling to make any concessions. Dickson was shown the paper, acknowledged it as satisfactory, and the matter came to an end.¹²

Crisis, conflict and compromise - perseverance, integrity, and faith mark the story of New Hope Presbyterian Church. New Hope stands as an abiding witness to the church of Jesus Christ in the New Hope community of Gaston County.¹³ While shaped by the winds of change and circumstance, the church still remains strong and alive today, even after two hundred years.

Presbyterians from the Bethel Presbyterian Church and possibly Goshen Presbyterian Church in the southeastern corner of Lincoln County organized the church in 1793. The Reverend Samuel Lytle Watson, who was New Hope's minister from 1827 to 1837, wrote:

"In Bethel's effort to obtain a pastor, a portion of the congregation became dissatisfied, and the church of Olney was organized in 1793 and Rev. W. C. Davis became its pastor. About this time, 1793, New Hope was organized, a part of whose members were

taken from Bethel."¹⁴

New Hope began in the last decade of the eighteenth century as a daughter of Bethel Church.¹⁵

During the early years of New Hope's existence, the church relied heavily on Bethel. Prior to and even after the church's official organization the Session of Bethel apparently acted as the Session for New Hope.¹⁶ Samuel Gingles, the church's first Elder, served both churches simultaneously. Gingles, who became an Elder for New Hope sometime after 1813, still acted as Clerk of the Session for Bethel as late as May 1817.¹⁷ While Olney Presbyterian Church parted from Bethel as a result of a clash between differing factions, New Hope remained closely tied to Bethel during its formative years.¹⁸

New Hope's membership was regularly counted with Bethel's. The first report from Bethel Presbytery to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1824 recorded that the membership of Bethel and New Hope was 539.¹⁸ Despite having been officially organized in 1814, the church stayed tied to Bethel. New Hope's grouping with Bethel for the General Assembly reports continued until 1827. In early 1828, New Hope was returned to Concord Presbytery in North Carolina.¹⁹ Bethel church provided the majority of New Hope's membership and leadership, yet contributions also came from Goshen and Steele Creek Presbyterian Churches.

New Hope's official organization in presbytery came through the efforts of Steele Creek church. Concord Presbytery, meeting at Thyatira Presbyterian Church on April 6, 1808, reported:

"A petition was received from the congregation in Lincoln County called New Hope, requesting that Mr. Hunter be directed to spend with them a fourth of his time for ye space of one year....On Mr. Hunter's consenting to comply with this request, the prayer of petition was

granted."²⁰

At the time of the request, the Reverend Humphrey Hunter was minister of Goshen and Steele Creek churches.²¹ From 1805 to 1813 Hunter served New Hope either one-fourth of his time or every fifth Sunday.²³ With Steele Creek's support, the New Hope congregation moved from informal to formal status as a church. On April 6, 1814, gathering at Goshen church for its spring meeting, Concord Presbytery inscribed:

"A number of families near Armstrong's Ford on the South Fork of the Catawba River, petitioned to be taken under care of the Presbytery to be known by the address of New Hope congregation and to receive supplies. Resolved that the prayer be granted."²²

Born of the Bethel church and organized by the Steele Creek church, the New Hope church became a recognized part of Concord Presbytery twenty-one years after it began.

The Stated Clerk of the Synod of North Carolina, D. I. Craig, said in writing to New Hope's pastor, J. B. Cochran, "It is very probable that the church, like scores of others, was in existence long before it was organized."²³ New Hope's beginnings, while somewhat vague, were an actuality years before it was placed on the roll of presbytery.

No Sessional records survived to chronicle the church's first years. Minutes did not formally begin to be kept until 1839. All accounts of the church's initial years originated from presbytery minutes, personal accounts, or General Assembly documents. Only at presbytery insistence did New Hope begin to keep track of its own history.²⁴

New Hope's first Session officially began with the recording of the minutes. Two Elders, Samuel Gingles and James C. Baird, initially served the church.²⁵ One of the church's early ministers, William Newton Morrison (1837-1839), helped the Session log the first

membership roll and to record the first minutes. Only at the insistence of the Presbytery of Morganton did the church begin keeping any minutes. Under Morrison, Gingles and Baird, New Hope began to resemble a typical Presbyterian church.

Not long after the Session began preserving minutes, an effort was made to add Elders and establish Deacons. First, the church added another Elder, Daniel Ford.²⁶ Shortly thereafter, the constituency of the Session was set at four members. On August 22, 1841, an election was held for two Elders and three Deacons. All declined to serve.²⁷ No further action was taken for two years. Finally, in early 1843, Winchester Pegram said if it was still the wish of the congregation, he was willing to serve.²⁸ New Hope's Sessional organization came none too soon.

Late in the spring of 1843, Elder J. C. Baird became embroiled in an embarrassing dispute with Mrs. Levi Hoffman. The Session noted various evil reports "...which seriously implicate Mr. Baird's moral character and also seriously injure the cause of religion."²⁹ Elders Gingles and Ford, from the Session, went to take Mrs. Hoffman's full statement. The Elders reported an embarrassing story. Mr. Baird offered Mrs. Hoffman a half dollar for a kiss and Mrs. Hoffman rejected Mr. Baird's offer. She asked him to leave. He told her to keep the half dollar as a gift. Mrs. Hoffman refused the money from Mr. Baird. She asked him what she should tell her husband. Mr. Baird told Mrs. Hoffman to throw the money out into the dirt and tell her husband that she found it. Elders Gingles and Ford said Mrs. Hoffman again refused Mr. Baird's offer and he left.

After due deliberation, the Session rendered the following decision: 1)that there was no criminal intention on Mr. Baird's part, 2)that what Mr. Baird did was "...exceedingly imprudent on the part of Mr. Baird..." and that he laid himself and the church open

to serious reproach, 3)that Mr. Baird be admonished "....for doing anything so unadvised and liable to be misrepresented..." and for suggesting to Mrs. Hoffman that she throw the money outside, pick it up, and tell her husband that she found it and thus practice falsehoods to her husband, and 4)that Mr. Baird's piety still be recognized. The statement was read to the congregation, thus ending the first sessionally mediated dispute in the church.³⁰

Controversies were not confined exclusively to the congregation. As early as 1825, the church overtured Bethel Presbytery to have intercommunion with a group called the Independent Presbyterians. Intercommunion involved sharing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with "...the people styling themselves the General Convention of the Independent Presbyterian Church..."³¹ The correspondence requested was primarily with Union and Olney Presbyterian Churches. Bethel Presbytery referred the matter to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.³² General Assembly denied the overture. A second overture was sent to Concord Presbytery in 1845 on the same matter. Again, New Hope was forbidden intercommunion with the Independent Presbyterians.³³ Following the second petition, New Hope let the matter rest, but the church's mission outreach developed in other areas.

From its inception, the church reached out to blacks. New Hope welcomed slaves as full communing members, the same as the church welcomed white members. Black infants received baptism the same as white infants. As long as blacks displayed a satisfactory acquaintance with "experimental religion", the blacks were admitted to the church. The only discrepancies came in the church roll and worship. Blacks were enrolled only by their surname prior to the Civil War. After the war, blacks were suddenly recorded as having a first and last name. In services, blacks were confined to the church's balcony. Only following the

Civil War did the church begin to sever its relationship with blacks.³⁴

The earliest Session minutes primarily dealt with receiving and dismissing members. Normally, membership changes came only during the annual communion seasons. Sacramental seasons were usually week-long celebrations of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. However, the additions and deletions to the church's rolls were not confined to these times. On July 23, 1843, the Session met at the home of W. Cox to receive him as member before his death eight days later.³⁵ In September, 1842, the church took in sixteen members during a morning service and six members during the evening service. The following day, the church added five more members. On June 30, 1848, the thirteen children of the William McClure family received the sacrament of baptism.³⁶ Minister James Davidson Hall received 151 members during his lengthy pastorate at New Hope.³⁷ Dismissions in the early years amounted to only a handful. Prior to the 1860's, New Hope experienced steady, consistent growth.

The Civil War and its aftermath struck the church hard. During the war, New Hope was barely able to maintain services. The able-bodied men were away in the army. Women and children were left to keep the farms functioning. The men still around were too old to fight or had been invalidated out of the army. But, the remaining men had to console the widowed families, send off to war teenage sons, bring home for burial slain sons and neighbors, and keep the church doors open.³⁸ While the war did not directly ravage the New Hope area, the war did affect the church for generations. Still, the church managed to elect three new officers during the war. However, the church was only able to ordain two of the newly elected officers since the third electee was serving in the army at the time of his election.³⁹ Late in the war, J. D. Hall left the church. The end of Hall's pastorate brought a

significant change in the church's direction.

Reconstruction (1865-1877) ushered in a more rigid leadership and spirit at New Hope. The switch blanketed the church with an atmosphere of gloom and suspicion. New minister, Benjamin Leander Beall, shortly after arriving, had the Session issue the following declaration:

"Whereas there is in the church, which we as a Session represent, evils which are prejudicial to the witness of Christ's Kingdom, and whereas also we are bound to seek the peace, unity, and purity of the church; 1)Therefore resolved that the grace of God aiding us, we will endeavor to remove these evils by kind council with the delinquent members and prayer for their spiritual good. 2)Should other measures fail to remove said evils, we will in virtue of the authority conferred on us by the Word of God and the church in which we be as officers proceed to exercise with kindness & in a Christian spirit the discipline of the church."⁴⁰

The post-war years witnessed a decline in membership, the systematic suspension and excommunication of members, and continual Sessional struggles with dancing and intoxication. Owing to the state of the country, New Hope was unable to pay Beall a stated salary. The church languished from suspicion and animosity immediately following the war.⁴¹

During the pastorate of B. L. Beall, New Hope lost most of its black members. The Session in 1866 asked "...colored members....to confer with them in reference to their future relations to this church."⁴² Following the publication of the request, most blacks either transferred to other churches or drifted away without any indication of their status. By the 1870's blacks no longer appeared on the rolls of the church.

One positive note during Beall's ministry was the

opening of a church mission. Twice a month Beall would preach at the schoolhouse "...on the other side of the South Fork of the Catawba River."⁴³ Beall's missionary efforts began an outreach that continued at New Hope for more than fifty years.

The last half of the Nineteenth Century embedded the use of sacramental seasons into the very fibre of New Hope. Prior to the Civil War, the church celebrated the Lord's Supper according to the ministers' schedules. Following the war, the church set the times of March-April, July-August, and October-November for holy communion. New Hope held to these high holy times until well into the next century.⁴⁴

The arrival of John Joseph Kennedy as minister coincided with the church's opening of the conflict with social issues. Alcohol initially consumed the Session's attention. In 1872, intoxication brought on the suspension of Ruling Elder, William R. McLean.⁴⁵ Throughout the 1870's and 1880's, the Session was constantly dealing with members who were "...using spirits to excess..."⁴⁶ J. B. Cochran said: "In those days, distilleries flourished in Gaston County, over forty it is said..."⁴⁷ New Hope wrestled with all the attendant difficulties of alcohol and other controversies well into the twentieth century.

New Hope struggled with intemperance, yet New Hope still grew. Following the dispiriting pastorate of B. L. Beall, the church began to increase its membership. Under the direction of J. J. Kennedy and subsequent ministers, New Hope steadily expanded. Kennedy added 113 members. Later ministers continued the upsurge in the church's growth.⁴⁸

Under the leadership of Leslie Rainey McCormick, New Hope experienced a great revival in 1884. From July 26 through August 2, 1884, the church received 34 members.⁴⁹ While McCormick's stay at New Hope was short, his impact on the congregation's growth was enormous.

William E. McIlwain followed McCormick's brief sojourn at the church. McIlwain introduced a strong outreach program. Under W. E. McIlwain, New Hope began a Sabbath School in 1886.⁵⁰ Two years later, New Hope became the mother church for a Presbyterian Church in Lowell. The Session concluded:

"Believing that the establishment of a mission church at Lowell in the bounds of New Hope would be for the convenience and prosperity of the people living in that vicinity, we, as a Session recommend and appoint the following Committee to locate and make all the necessary arrangements for erecting a suitable house of worship at that place."⁵¹

The committee consisted of J. L. Stowe, J. R. Reid, Dr. Frank Robinson, Sloan Robinson, J. A. Cox, and J. H. Wilson. At the same time, the church dismissed members to new churches in Belmont and Gastonia. The preaching station was maintained in South Point and the McLean's Chapel was organized. Even with the loss of membership to the new churches and chapels, New Hope's congregation reached 156 by the end of the 1880's.⁵²

The close of W. E. McIlwain's ministry threw the church into turbulent times. At the end of 1891, J. W. Reid resigned as Clerk of the Session, after serving 38 years. The problems with alcohol and distilleries multiplied. New Hope faced the social ills brought on by industrialization and urbanization: dancing, broken families, infidelity, and embezzlement. Despite the difficulties plaguing the church, growth spurted after a brief lull in the early 1890's.⁵³

With the advent of the new century, the church leaped into a new era. Early in 1900, New Hope "...adopted the envelope system for collecting the money."⁵⁴ At the end of 1902, the church shifted into Kings Mountain Presbytery, after being part of Mecklenburg Presbytery for thirty-three years.⁵⁵ In 1904, the gaugers-gaugers bondsmen controversy

surfaced. Gaugers measured and certified whiskey and gaugers bondsmen underwrote gaugers. For years the Session gave tacit approval to gaugers bondsmen while ostracizing the gaugers. Once after a nine year suspension, the church restored three gaugers to full church membership.⁵⁶ During the same year, McLean's Chapel was officially organized into El Bethel Presbyterian Church. However, due to the question of the legality of marriage, El Bethel folded in a year and a half.⁵⁷ The year 1904 also saw the surfacing of the Dickson-Leeper controversy. Minister J. B. Cochran wrote and published the first history of New Hope in 1906. Late in 1907, New Hope purchased the first public school building erected in the New Hope community. The old one room schoolhouse was torn down and sold and the proceeds were used to pay the minister's salary.⁵⁸ Supporting the minister remained a problem for the church throughout the decade. Despite all the tumult, the church's membership rose steadily, until reaching 200 in 1907.⁵⁹ The following year, the New Hope women began the first Ladies Society, with thirty-five members.⁶⁰ At the end of 1909, the church underwent a change in pastors and entered upon an era of relative stability for the church.

The ministry of Richard Spotswood Burwell gave New Hope a steadiness through some formidable years. Under Burwell, the church took its second candidate for the ministry under care, Raymond H. Ratchford. During 1913, the church provided start-up support for the Mayworth Chapel, eventually to become Cramerton Presbyterian Church. Burwell nominally increased the church's membership to 215. As New Hope faced the onset of World War I, Burwell ably guided the church during the upheavals.⁶¹

Immediately after the First World War, the church entered a long period of decline. The great influenza epidemic forced the closing of New Hope's doors for a

month in October-November, 1918. Deaths occurred so fast that burials in the church's cemetery were made in unmarked graves. Membership plummeted. From a high of 215 members in 1918, the congregation dropped to a low of 109 members at the start of 1930. New Hope's misfortunes during the close of the teens and throughout the twenties were mirrored by much of the South.

Still, New Hope moved forward in some areas. Elder W. Thomas Ford had a telephone installed in the manse. The Session instituted the Every Member Canvas and guaranteed ten percent to benevolences for educational institutions. Yet, positive accomplishments were relatively rare for the church during the decade of the 1920's.

In 1920, the church did not appear able to support a minister and looked into a grouping with Lowell.⁶² After having its own minister for twenty years the church, in a congregational meeting, "by a decided vote chose to stand alone."⁶³ The church throughout the twenties always verged on the edge of being unable to support the minister. Finally, in 1929 New Hope had to enter a shared ministry with Stanley Creek Presbyterian Church for the services of Louis Key Martin. With Martin's arrival, the congregation's misfortunes began to wane.⁶⁴

The onset of the Depression years did not traumatize New Hope, as they did much of the rest of the nation. By the time the country's economic woes struck, the church already had been mired in more than ten years of hard times. Martin's leadership reversed the church's long downward spiral. New Hope embarked on an ambitious remodeling program for the sanctuary. Membership began to grow, slightly. More than anything, Martin restored the church's optimism.

William Davis Wolfe's pastorate brought progress and innovation to New Hope. Wolfe instituted the offering box era in 1935. The offering box was a

wooden box placed on the back pew in the sanctuary with two separate compartments, one for the pastor's salary and one for the work of the church. Initiation of the unique offering system sent contributions up remarkably. At Wolfe's insistence, New Hope deposited its Sessional records in the Montreat Historical Foundation for the first time. Led by Wolfe, the church wrestled with the introduction of the Minister's Annuity Fund. Consideration of the Fund began in 1937 and final approval came in 1950. As the Depression years drew to a close, membership edged back up to 133. The creative leadership of W. D. Wolfe prepared the church for the great transformations wrought by the Second World War.⁶⁵

World War II forever lifted New Hope out of its rural cocoon. Tragically, the church manse burned in October, 1941. Wolfe and his family moved into the old brick schoolhouse the church had purchased in 1938 until a new manse could be built. The congregation kept expanding, with the membership reaching 151 by 1944. Then, on October 29, 1944 W. D. Wolfe suffered a heart attack and literally died in the pulpit. Shortly after Wolfe's death, the war ended and service personnel began returning home, forever changed and forever to change the church.⁶⁶

The post-war years brought a boom to New Hope. As the area's economy grew, so the church began to expand, congregationally and structurally. Pastor John Henry Knight oversaw the transformation of the old brick schoolhouse into the church's first educational building. During Knight's pastorate, the church undertook a massive increase in the number of deacons. The Board of Deacons expanded from five to fifteen members. Knight organized strong evangelistic services every June, with well-known visiting speakers. Returning veterans boosted the church's membership, increased attendance, and taxed the church's childcare facilities to the limit. J. H. Knight presided over

the addition of a new organ and a baptismal font in 1948. New Hope's first Ruling Elder to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., Fred Dixon, went in 1948. The previous year, the Session approved its third son for the ministry, James Edward Craig. One year later, 1948, the Session asked the Presbytery of Kings Mountain to accept another applicant for the ministry, George Edward Dameron. In 1949, the church added a large tract of land to the area around the manse. The years of John H. Knight were expansion years for the church.⁶⁷

A brief two year stay by Samuel Dwight Winn, retired missionary, allowed New Hope to consolidate its gains before the church experienced further growth. Under Winn, the church's membership once again topped 200, reaching 205 in 1952. Columbia Theological Seminary student, George E. Dameron, spent the summer of 1952 assisting the elderly Winn. S. D. Winn set in motion the process to incorporate the church prior to his resignation. In June, 1953, Winn retired on account of declining health and advancing age.⁶⁸

One year later, New Hope secured the pastoral services of John Hamilton Buzhardt. Buzhardt led the church through a decade of rapid growth. He secured the church's first clerical help shortly after his arrival. Under his pastoral oversight, New Hope underwent a changing of the guard. First, Clerk of the Session, W. D. Lewis, resigned in 1954, after twenty-seven years as clerk. Second, in 1955, Buzhardt made possible the church's adoption of the rotary system for Deacons. Thirdly, in 1957, he again helped the church proceed to the rotary system for Ruling Elders. While Buzhardt was at the church, New Hope established an historical room, encouraged by sisters Ida and Zoe Hoffman. The beginning of the end of Sunday night service came in 1956. Sunday School classes were added to meet the growing demand by adults and children. Mrs. Marshall (Eunice, "Mama") Reid was hired as church

organist, a junior choir was organized for the first time in the church's history, and Mrs. Wilma Smith was hired as the church's choir director. Additional land was purchased in 1958 from Mrs. Pat Smith and Mr. David Harrison. The same year saw the return of the church's two former sons who had become ministers, James E. Craig and George E. Dameron, to lead communion services. Throughout Buzhardt's pastorate, the Session regularly held studies of The Book of Church Order. To enhance the congregation's fellowship, the church began holding Thanksgiving breakfasts in 1955, which lasted until 1959. By 1960, church membership had grown to 245 members. The 1960's started dramatically. A report from the Board of Deacons said the church needed a new sanctuary instead of remodeling the existing sanctuary. The Session set in motion the necessary committees to study the proposal for a new building. With new church plans underway, Buzhardt tendered his resignation.⁶⁹

The upheavals in the nation during the 1960's were mirrored by New Hope. Six months after Buzhardt's departure, Edwin Oscar Byrd, Jr. was called to the church. Byrd oversaw the demise of the old sanctuary and the erection of the new sanctuary. However, the new building did not come without pain. Opposition to the construction project from sisters Ida and Zoe Hoffman created considerable tension. Other efforts fared more favorably for the church. New Hope pledged \$350 a year for three years to the St. Andrews Presbyterian College start-up fund in 1961. A new circle was added to the Women of the Church in 1962. In August, 1963, the church held a community wide revival at New Hope Elementary School with Bethesda United Methodist and Friendship Baptist Churches. The Session raised the pastor's salary in mid-year that same year. Further, New Hope participated in a "Get Acquainted" course for the Covenant Life Curriculum. A survey was made of the church property and an upgrade

was begun on the church cemetery. Weekly bulletins began to be used in 1963. On the personnel side, New Hope faired good and bad under Byrd's guidance. Ruling Elder, James Leonard Brandon, Sr. attended General Assembly in 1962 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, representing Kings Mountain Presbytery. The ongoing dispute over the new sanctuary with the Hoffman sisters caused the resignation of Building Committee Chairman, Charles Stone. By 1964, the relationship between the Hoffmans and the Session had become so strained that the Session voted to relieve sister Ida Hoffman from the Building Committee, to end her duties as church and Women of the Church historian, and to secure all church documents in her possession. Despite the conflict, the building program proceeded. In 1965, the new sanctuary, a neo-colonial masterpiece, was built. With the completion of New Hope's third sanctuary, other difficulties, largely overshadowed by the building campaign, began to resurface. The C.L.C. curriculum was introduced church-wide in 1964, but there was not unanimous acceptance. The Session voted to withhold money from the National Council of Churches in 1965. With the sanctuary finished, Byrd resigned early in 1966. The years of E. O. Byrd, Jr. were packed with controversy and accomplishment.⁷⁰

With Archie Davis, the trauma and progress continued. Zoe Hoffman plagued Davis despite his support for the Burwell Historical Chapel, built in 1967. The church sent a letter to the General Assembly Board of National Ministries and Christian Education, voicing its dissent over the use of church benevolences. In mid-1969, the Session took a stand opposing union presbyteries and synods. On the more favorable side, in late 1966 the Session allowed the introduction of flowers in the sanctuary, overseen by the WOC. The year also marked the first time a woman was elected to a church office, Mrs. William T. (Dollie) McLean became a Trustee. Miss Donna Bezdek

was hired in 1968 as the church's first Director of Christian Education. Membership kept rising, reaching 277 members by 1969. Near the end of the decade, Davis ended his pastorate at the church.⁷¹

The ministry of David Carlton White advanced, yet divided New Hope. White's leadership pushed membership to over 300 for the first time. At the same time, White led the church to drop its support of most P.C.U.S. benevolent causes. During White's pastorate, the church built an Activities Building, located behind the manse across New Hope Road from the church. While White was pastor, New Hope began using extremely conservative curriculum materials. White became heavily involved in the "Continuing Presbyterian Church," the forerunner of the Presbyterian Church in America. Conservative P.C.U.S. leader, Aiken Taylor, was invited to speak in 1972. Revival hymnals were placed in the sanctuary's pews. In late 1972, the Session decided not to eliminate all traditional Presbyterian benevolences. Early in 1973, White resigned. Still, the simmering split was not resolved. Only after the Session defeated a motion to call for the church to leave the P.C.U.S. did the issue die. The divisiveness cost the church some members and officers, but the church survived.⁷²

Traditional Presbyterian minister, William Frye Summers, Jr., slowly restored the church to the mainstream. The church hired another D.C.E., Mrs. LaRue Moore. New Hope gradually returned to denominational benevolence patterns. However, problems created prior to Summers' pastorate lingered. Membership dropped between 1973 and 1977. Once again, financial difficulties erupted in the church. Even though the church faltered, the church did not succumb. Helping to heal the wounds was the birth of a baby to the Summers early in 1975, the first child born in a minister's family at New Hope since the early 1900's. The church published the New Hope Presbyterian Church

Cemetery Index in 1976. The same year, New Hope struck a commemorative national Bicentennial communion token. The church was made part of the Gaston County Bicentennial tour. Prayer meetings on Wednesday evenings were continued, but Sunday evening services were finally abandoned permanently. In 1977, the church developed its own personalized bulletins. A children's choir was reintroduced and a bell choir was begun after the church received a memorial set of handbells. A major breakthrough was achieved in 1978. New Hope elected its first woman as an officer, Deacon Mrs. Frank (Lois) Smith. The New Hope community senior citizens began meeting in the church's Activities Building in 1979. Summers increased the church's outreach, with the church supporting the 2 Cents a Meal International Mission Program, the Medical Benevolence Foundation, and flood relief for churches in Ashe County, North Carolina. With the church once again strongly in the Presbyterian mainstream, Summers accepted a pastoral call in South Carolina.⁷³

A brief pastorate by Robert LeRoy Hennessee ruptured the newly restored cohesiveness of the church. Hennessee initiated the committee structure, but personal problems limited his effectiveness. After less than eighteen months he resigned.⁷⁴

Seeking someone of impeccable character, the church called James Mitchell Cockerham. Cockerham oversaw the transition of the church to a fully suburbanized congregation. In 1982, members of the Session, Eugene Martin and Harold Stowe, participated in the development of New Hope Elementary School property. The church initiated plans for the New Hope Community School of the Arts in June, 1983. The following year, New Hope elected its first female Elder, Mrs. Fred (Nellie Bailey) Stowe. That same year, the church embarked on an ambitious renovation project for the church's educational building. Mission still caught the church's imagination as the church joined in the

2 Cents a Meal Program on the local, Presbytery, and international levels. The General Assembly's "Commitment to Peacemaking" was approved in 1986. Locally, the church decided not to adopt the unicameral system officers. New Hope chose to maintain the historical separation, the Session and the Board of Deacons. With a grant from the First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia, the church again hired a D.C.E. for three years, Victoria Louise Moss. After six hard years, Cockerham tendered his resignation in July, 1988.⁷⁵

Heading into the last decade of the twentieth century, the church maintained its forward momentum. Under the Articles of Agreement formulated in 1983 for the reunion of the P.C.U.S. and U.P.C.U.S.A., churches in the old P.C.U.S. denomination could choose to retain direct control of their property. New Hope chose to exercise that privilege in 1988. The month after Cockerham resigned, the Session endorsed Mrs. Moss as a candidate for the ministry. Following nearly a year without a full-time minister, the church called a new pastor.

Brian Dale Weger moved to the Piedmont church after a pastorate along North Carolina's coast. Weger and his family were greeted by Hurricane Hugo, the worst storm to strike the area in over one hundred years. Under Weger's guidance, New Hope prepared to celebrate its Bicentennial, made numerous necessary maintenance improvements, and responded once again to the church's historical support of missions. New Hope continued to break new ground in its two hundred year history of serving Jesus Christ.

After two centuries, New Hope remains a vital church in the ongoing ministry of the church universal. The years have swiftly fled as the church's ministers and members have endured the pains and have embraced the joys that have marked the life of the congregation. As the men and women who have

constituted New Hope have kept the church alive, so the clergy who have come to New Hope have nurtured the growth, mission, and faith of the church.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER ONE

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28. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. I, Feb. 12, 1843, pages unnumbered.
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33. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, July 15, 1845, p. 107 and CP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. IV, Oct. 13, 1845, p. 519 & 534.
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CHAPTER TWO

THOSE WHO SHARED THE LIGHT

No regular minister served New Hope during the formative years. For more than ten years, the church relied on pastors from neighboring churches, itinerants traveling through the area, and stated supplies directed by presbytery to serve congregations without ministers. New Hope, with close ties to Bethel, Goshen, and Steele Creek Presbyterian Churches, probably received pastoral support from all three churches.

The first identified minister to serve New Hope was Humphrey Hunter (pastorate, 1805-1813; b.1755, d.1827). Mr. Hunter was directed by Concord Presbytery in April, 1808 to give "...them a fourth of his time for ye space of one year."¹ At the time Mr. Hunter agreed to supply New Hope, he was minister of Goshen and Steele Creek churches. Having been called by Steele Creek church in 1805, Mr. Hunter apparently gave New Hope a fourth of his time or every fifth Sunday. Mr. Hunter itinerated regularly at the church during his tenure.²

Humphrey Hunter was born in Ulster, Ireland, but entered this country when he was four. He and his widowed mother journeyed from Charleston, South Carolina to the area of the Poplar Tent Presbyterian Church near Concord, North Carolina, where she purchased a farm and raised her son. At twenty-three, Hunter decided to pursue a classical education. He spent a year at the Clio Nursery under the Reverend James Hall. Following his brief stay with Hall, he entered Queens Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina, but remained only a few months. In 1780, he joined the

revolutionary army. He served, was captured, and escaped. The following four years Hunter spent under the tutelage of the Reverend Robert Archibald in his school at Poplar Tent church. For two more years he studied at Mt. Zion College at Winnsboro, South Carolina. After graduating in July, 1787, Hunter began his theological studies under the Presbytery of South Carolina. In October, 1789, Hunter was licensed to preach by the Presbytery.³

After his licensure and ordination, he served six years in South Carolina before returning to familiar surroundings. Hunter accepted the call to the Goshen and Unity churches. The two church charge embraced all of Lincoln County west of the Catawba River above Beattie's Ford to the South Carolina line and west to the Olney Church. While serving these churches, Hunter regularly moved through the New Hope area. His call to Steele Creek and Hopewell churches in 1805 continued his contact with the New Hope church until the supply status was formalized in 1808.⁴

However, New Hope's ties to the Bethel Church were strong. In 1813, the church once again gravitated towards its mother congregation. The Rev. James S. Adams (pastorates, 1813-1817 and 1819-Nov., 1827; b. 1772, d. 1843) became Bethel's pastor in 1811.⁵ Shortly after going to Bethel, Adams began filling the pulpit at New Hope. Concord Presbytery formalized the organization of New Hope at its spring Presbytery meeting in April, 1814. At the same meeting, the Presbytery directed Adams to supply New Hope one Sunday a month.⁶ Adams' efforts at New Hope eventually included two separate pastorates and spanned more than two decades.

Adams' pastoral oversight promulgated New Hope's formal recognition as a church. The church's first recognized Elder, Samuel Gingles, was ordained by Adams. Gingles was actually ordained by Adams at the Bethel church between 1811 and 1813. During Adams'

tenure, he saw the church move from Concord Presbytery to the newly organized Bethel Presbytery. In 1825, the church hosted its initial Presbytery meeting under Adams' leadership. Only the return of the North Carolina border churches to Concord Presbytery in 1827 brought Adams' ties to New Hope to an official end.⁷

The intervening years between Adams' two efforts as the church's stated supply were filled by Henry M. Kerr (pastorate 1817-1819; b.1782, d.1865). In 1817, Kerr was ordained as minister of the Long Creek, New Hope, and Olney churches. He was the first of only two ministers to be ordained and installed as the church's pastor in the church's two hundred year history. Kerr spent two short years at New Hope before moving west to Rutherfordton, North Carolina. His ministry was brief, leaving little evidence of what he accomplished at the church.⁸

With the termination of the long relationship with Adams, New Hope began a new and profitable relationship with Samuel Lytle Watson (pastorate, Nov., 1827-1837; b.1798, d.1882). Watson was called as minister of the Steele Creek Church for three-quarters of his time, "...the balance he was to give to New Hope some ten miles distant beyond the River."⁹ Only the placement of New Hope within the bounds of the newly created Morganton Presbytery in 1836 severed Watson's affiliation with the church. Watson left no records of his work at New Hope, but he did leave the only surviving account of New Hope's origins in 1793. Samuel L. Watson served the church in an area that had been familiar to him since birth.¹⁰

Watson was born and raised in the Allison Creek congregation in York County, South Carolina. He grew up only ten miles south of the New Hope Church. Except for a year at South Carolina College at Columbia, S.C., three years at Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey, and another year as an evangelist out west in Montgomery, Alabama, Watson labored his entire life in

the immediate vicinity of his childhood home. His longest pastorates were Steele Creek, twelve years (1829-1840) and Bethel, forty-two years (1840-1882). Watson died only six weeks after dissolving the relationship with the Bethel Church.¹¹

New Hope's shift from Concord Presbytery to the newly created Morganton Presbytery blessed the church with a new minister, William Newton Morrison (pastorate, Nov. 9, 1837-Sept. 12, 1839; b.1810, d.1885). Morrison pastored the Goshen and New Hope churches, giving New Hope one-fourth of his time. He came to the church immediately after being ordained as an evangelist by Morganton Presbytery. Prior to ordination, W. N. Morrison labored as a licentiate for Goshen and New Hope churches from 1835 to 1837, functioning only as a stated supply. Under Morrison's guidance, the Session undertook the task of keeping the church's minutes and proceedings.¹²

During William N. Morrison's years of service, the Session initiated the first Sessional record book. Morrison compiled the first roll of members at New Hope, with 70 being reported in 1838. The book was later lost by long-time Clerk of the Session, James W. Reid. More than anything else, Morrison acquainted the church with standard Presbyterian procedure.¹³

Morrison had strong Presbyterian roots. He received his undergraduate education at Washington College (later Washington & Lee) in Lexington, Virginia. Following college, Morrison attended Princeton Theological Seminary, but was forced to drop out due to ill health. He resumed his divinity training at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, graduating in 1835. From seminary, Morrison went directly into the pastorate, where he remained until his retirement.¹⁴

The pastorate of John S. McCutchan (pastorate, Apr. 22, 1840-1846; b.1807, d.1848) marked a significant advance for New Hope's ministers. The church called

McCutchan for one-half of his time, the other half apparently going to Goshen. Under McCutchan's leadership, the church received 82 members. Like his predecessor, McCutchan continued the church's newly begun practice of recordkeeping.¹⁵

The first surviving Session minutes detailed McCutchan's efforts. He moderated the first recorded congregational dispute, the Baird-Hoffman disagreement. His minutes marked the first sacramental season. On September 24-25, 1842 he received 22 new members - 16 at morning services on the 24th and 6 at evening services the same day. McCutchan first initiated the procedure to meet at members' homes to conduct church business. Under his direction, the church conducted the first officer elections. J. S. McCutchan put the church on a solid administrative footing.¹⁶

The arrival of James Davidson Hall (pastorate, May 1, 1847-June 5, 1864; b.1806, d.1892) brought New Hope an era of stability amidst years of chaos, contention, and conflict. J. D. Hall stayed eighteen years, the longest pastorate in the church's history.¹⁷ After graduating from the University of North Carolina in 1828 and Union Theological Seminary in 1833, Hall began his pastoral career. Following a twelve year pastorate at the Franklin and Thyatira churches in Rowan County, N.C., Hall moved to Gaston County, where he remained the rest of his life. Hall's call to New Hope came in conjunction with the Goshen and Olney churches. For most of his time at the three churches, he served as a stated supply. Only during the last six years of his stay at New Hope did he become the actual pastor of the church. He left behind a remarkable record of accomplishments at the church.¹⁸

Pastorally and personally, J. D. Hall significantly impacted congregational life. He received 151 members during his years at New Hope. In 1858, Hall guided the church through the construction of a new sanctuary. While at the church, he organized the Presbyterian

church in Dallas, North Carolina, the county seat of the newly created Gaston County. Under his guidance, the church regularly began admitting blacks as members. Hall's ministry and life were closely intertwined with New Hope's development.¹⁹

James D. Hall came from a distinguished line of Presbyterians. E. F. Rockwell, D.D., the family biographer, claimed the Halls sent twenty-five sons into the ministry and thirty-six daughters married ministers. Two of Hall's sons, William T. Hall and J. K. Hall, entered the ministry. W. T. Hall joined New Hope on October 25, 1851. The third son in the influential family, J. D. Hall, admirably carried on the Presbyterian tradition.²⁰

Hall's family life was both a joy and a tragedy. Prior to coming to New Hope, Hall was twice widowed. A single child was the product of his first union. The second marriage produced no children. His third marriage, after he arrived at New Hope, increased his family substantially. He and his third wife, Elizabeth Neagle, who remained with him until his death, raised six sons and one daughter. Of his children, besides the two already mentioned who went into the ministry, one became an Elder, another a Deacon, and his daughter married a Presbyterian minister. At eighty-six years of age, after forty-five years of marriage to his third wife, Hall was interred in the Goshen cemetery.²¹

James D. Hall brought schooling to New Hope and the surrounding area. Noting a lack of education in the county when he arrived, Hall established a classical school. He was one of the founders of Davidson College and a long-time Trustee for the school. Hall even served a few years as Trustee for Union Theological Seminary. His ministry spanned fifty-nine years, the bulk of those years associated with advancing learning.²²

Following Hall's lengthy tenure, Benjamin Leander Beall (pastorate, Oct. 27, 1865-Apr. 27, 1867; b.1827,

d.1913) became the church's pastor. Beall had a relatively short pastorate at New Hope. Prior to coming to New Hope, Beall served as a Missionary Chaplain in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. He supplied both the New Hope and Dallas churches, as well as preaching at the schoolhouse in the South Point area.²³

The years at New Hope for B. L. Beall were stormy ones. A resolution by the Session indicated that widespread unrest troubled the church throughout his tenure. Blacks began to leave the church, only five members joined the church during his pastorate, and he received no guaranteed salary. During Beall's stay, the Session always seemed to be exercising discipline and coping with bad feelings. His ministry was marked by the same uncertainty, distrust, and economic woes that gripped much of the South following the war.²⁴

The arrival of John Joseph Kennedy (pastorate, Sept. 3, 1867-May 2, 1883; b.1838, d.1912) restored much of New Hope's former stability. Kennedy had the second longest pastorate in the church's history, serving the church ably and well for sixteen years. He divided his time between New Hope and Long Creek. While the pastor at these churches, Kennedy also did evangelistic work with the weak churches of Goshen, Dallas, and Mallard Creek. New Hope slowly recovered from the ravages of the war during Kennedy's years.²⁵

Kennedy's leadership prospered the church. He received 113 members. Despite losing all black members while he was at the church, the membership still climbed to 120 by the time he departed. In 1873, the church hosted Mecklenburg Presbytery, being only the third time the church entertained Presbytery. Kennedy had a posthumous obituary published to the church's first Elder, Samuel Gingles. He added a number of Elders and Deacons. At the end of his pastorate, the Session wrote:

"That we do surely express the high respect and

esteem in which he and his wife are held in this congregation and we bear cordial testimony to the fidelity and zeal with which he has discharged the duties of his office, both in and out the pulpit for fifteen years and a half; and we do earnestly invoke the blessings of God upon him in his future labors and upon his family."²⁶

Kennedy closed out his years at New Hope by giving part of his time to supplying the new church in Gastonia.

The all-too brief ministry of Leslie Rainey McCormick (pastorate, Sept. 24, 1884-Mar. 25, 1885; b.1843, d.1887) still added immeasurably to the church. A call was placed in McCormick's hands by Mecklenburg Presbytery, but the call was never prosecuted. McCormick stayed less than a year, but received 36 members. He pushed the congregation's membership to 145. Evidently, poor health troubled McCormick. He died less than two years after he returned to Bethel Presbytery.²⁷

A human dynamo descended on New Hope in the form of William E. McIlwain (pastorate, May 23, 1885-Dec. 29, 1889; b.1848, d.1938). He split his time between New Hope and the new church in Gastonia. While at New Hope, McIlwain guided the Session in the establishment of the Lowell church, supported the organization of the Belmont church, and encouraged the construction of McLean's Chapel.²⁸ On July 26, 1889, the Session recorded:

"Whereas Dr. Frank Robinson donated a lot in Lowell to the Trustees of New Hope Church upon which to erect a chapel church and for which he executed a deed to the Trustees of said church, and whereas the said church of Lowell has been organized and Trustees appointed to hold the property of said church. Therefore Resolved that the Trustees of New Hope are hereby ordered to transfer the Deed to the Trustees of

the Lowell Church that Dr. Robinson may execute a new Deed to said Trustees, as the old not being registered, may be cancelled."²⁹

Shortly after the successful organization of Lowell, W. E. McIlwain inspired the Session to support the New church in Belmont. The Session:

"...authorized the Clerk of the Session to issue certificates to all the members of New Hope Church beyond the South Fork who desire to connect themselves with the Belmont Church when organized, and to see how much they can pay a minister for the one fourth of his time."³⁰

The same year, McIlwain cleared the way for McLean's Chapel to be built. Both the Belmont church and the McLean's Chapel efforts came after McIlwain had become pastor at the Gastonia church, but he still supplied New Hope regularly until the church called another pastor. McIlwain left his mark on every aspect of the church's life.³¹

McIlwain greatly expanded New Hope's ministry. He directed the Session in the organization of the Sabbath School. Despite dismissing members to the new churches in Lowell and Belmont and the McLean's Chapel, membership still jumped to 156. He got the Session to remodel the church, taking down the old balcony slave gallery and painting the building. He encouraged the first son from New Hope to enter the ministry, William C. Underwood.³² Even in dismissing members, McIlwain promoted growth. In 1889 he had the Session dismiss one member to Mississippi to "...form a new Presbyterian church."³³ W. E. McIlwain infected the church with a sense of accomplishment, yet his pastorate did not pass without some setbacks.

On the negative side, McIlwain fought cultural changes and congregational crises. During his pastorate, the alcohol issue began to surface. Members had to be continually suspended for the social taboos of dancing and adultery. He oversaw the resignation of

long-time Clerk, J. W. Reid.³⁴ The church's first Sessional records were lost during his tenure. According to the accepted folk story, the book was lost when someone carrying the minutes was fording a local river. On September 22, 1888, the Sessional Minutes reported:

"Whereas the Session had agreed to meet at South Point Church for the purpose of receiving members, And whereas on account of constant rains and flooded streams only the Moderator and one ruling elder were present and these feeling it was very uncertain when they could meet again there to receive these members, proceeded to examine and receive them without a quorum; Therefore be it resolved by the Session that although this was irregular it is hereby pronounced valid and their names are ordered to be recorded."³⁵

McIlwain's companion on that journey was most likely aging Clerk J. W. Reid, giving credence to the oral tradition about the loss of New Hope's initial Minutes. W. E. McIlwain's ministry at the church was productive, but not totally smooth sailing.

After more than a year without a regular minister, New Hope called Robert Alexander Miller (pastorate, Feb. 8, 1891-Apr. 12, 1901; b.1848, d.1916). He served a three church charge; New Hope, Lowell, and Belmont. Seventy-two members joined while Miller was minister with membership hovered in the mid-130's throughout his years. Miller's tenure afforded New Hope the necessary time to consolidate after the rapid expansion of the late 1880's. Still, his efforts were flawed by the resulting evils of industrialization. Miller constantly had to have the Session deal with temperance problems, the result of over forty distilleries in Gaston County. He had to mediate an ongoing feud between the church's storekeepers and gaugers and gaugers bondsmen. By 1897 the problems had multiplied

to the point that Miller had to read a resolution from the pulpit against dancing, intemperance, and nonattendance. The end of Miller's pastorate coincided with the end of the century.³⁶

The arrival of the Twentieth Century signaled a remarkable change for New Hope's ministers. After over one hundred years of part-time ministers, the church initiated the calling of full-time ministers.³⁷

Joel Taylor Wade (pastorate, June 16, 1901-June 18 1903; b.1862, d.1957) ushered in the era of one church-one minister for New Hope. The church finally stood on its own, yet the step did not come easily. In January, 1901, the Deacons reported that they could not raise enough subscriptions for a full-time minister. Six months later the church had raised enough to call a minister "...for all of his time."³⁸ The sudden transition was as rocky for New Hope as the trip to New Hope was difficult for the Wades.

J. T. Wade and his family traveled to the church by horse and wagon. In Wade's autobiography Our Life Story, he wrote:

On this trip to my new home we.....had arranged.....to travel in our three seated mountain hack....We did not want to dispose of Lily, my little Jersey cow, and her fine heifer, so we hitched them to the back end of the hack....On this day....when we left home,....when we came to a seemingly good place to stop....we found that Walter was very sick, and we were afraid that he would not live....there was no physician anywhere near, and we gave him such treatment as we thought best....Soon we reached our destination..."³⁹

Despite Wade's rugged journey, he stayed only a short while.

In two years, J. T. Wade made the church's decision

to stand alone worthwhile for the church. He added 30 members to the church roll. The congregation built its first manse, a fine six room house. He led the church through the transition from Mecklenburg to Kings Mountain Presbytery. He taught at the first public school constructed by the county in the community. Wade put the new single church charge on a sound footing.⁴⁰

The succeeding pastorate of John Brice Cochran (pastorate, July 12, 1903-Dec. 31, 1909; b.1866, d.1912) reinforced the congregation's wisdom not to be grouped with any other churches. Cochran was the first minister to push membership to 200. He ably steered the Session through the minefield of the Leeper-Dickson dispute. His leadership helped heal the wounds between the storekeepers and gaugers bondsmen. On May 22, 1904, Cochran midwived the birth of El Bethel Presbyterian Church, formerly McLean's Chapel. Despite Cochran's valiant efforts, the third daughter of New Hope was stillborn. An internal dispute doomed El Bethel after only a year and a half of existence. In July, 1905 Cochran got the Session to roof and repair the church. He taught in the New Hope school and at McLean's Chapel-El Bethel. His wife introduced the first Ladies Society in 1908. Cochran contributed a great deal to the church, but perhaps his greatest contribution was his authorship of the first history of New Hope.⁴¹ In a little over six years, he steadied the church amidst ongoing internal and external upheavals.

A new decade brought a new minister, Richard Spotswood Burwell (pastorate, Mar. 27, 1910-Nov. 11, 1917; b.1853, d.1944). Burwell initially came as a stated supply, but quickly formalized the relationship as minister within six months. His ministry brought no dramatic upsurges in membership, but a modest increase to 207 by his last year. He guided New Hope's second son into the ministry in 1913, Raymond H.

Ratchford. In 1917 he became the first minister from New Hope to attend General Assembly, held in Birmingham, Alabama. Burwell supported initial efforts to organize Mayworth Chapel, later Cramerton Presbyterian Church. He cleared the way for the Session to organize the church's first choir. Burwell's only problem was the nagging one of money. Once the church had to send Elders J. W. Lowry, E. Perry Lewis, and J. N. Hanna to Presbytery to plead its case. After a sound pastorate, Burwell left for his last call.⁴²

World War I and its immediate aftermath scarred the church and its new minister, Hinton Raleigh Overcash, (pastorate, June 9, 1918-Apr. 4, 1920; b.1867, d.1927). With the influenza epidemic and the post-war economic decline striking the church hard, membership declined to 179.⁴³ Financial woes undermined the minister's efforts from the beginning. Early in 1920, the church appeared unable to support a pastor. A Congregational Meeting was called to consider grouping the church with Lowell. The church chose by a "...decided vote to stand alone."⁴⁴ As the church's difficulties deepened, H. R. Overcash dissolved his pastoral relationship with New Hope.

Archie McLauchlin (pastorate, Mar. 20, 1921-May 20, 1928; b.1863, d.1935) carried the church through the tough times of the 1920's. Between the major textile strikes in Gaston County and the steady flight from rural to urban life, New Hope's membership dipped to 123 by 1928. During McLauchlin's years, as in previous pastorates, the church constantly struggled with money problems. One highlight of McLauchlin's career at New Hope was the election in 1927 of W. D. Lewis as Clerk of the Session. McLauchlin served until ill health forced his retirement, but he remained in the community until his death. His wife and daughters continued to be part of the church community long after his death. He was buried in the New Hope cemetery, one of the

first ministers to be so honored.⁴⁵

McLauchlin came from traditional Presbyterian stock. He descended from strong Scotch Presbyterian parents. His education was at the customary Presbyterian institutions, Davidson College and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. McLauchlin went directly into the pastorate after seminary and remained there until he ended his career at New Hope.⁴⁶

The onslaught of the nationwide Depression also coincided with the arrival of a new minister at New Hope, Louis Key Martin (pastorate, July 14, 1929-Dec. 10, 1933; b.1888, d.1968). Martin's pastorate made the church a two-church charge once again, this time with Stanley Creek. Membership losses finally bottomed out under Martin at 109 in 1929, but recovered somewhat before he left the church. Under Martin's direction, New Hope carried out an extensive renovation project on the sanctuary. He steered the church through some difficult transition years. After leaving New Hope, Martin left full-time ministry and took up farming.⁴⁷

While mired deeply in the Depression, the church fortunately called one of its most creative ministers, William Davis Wolfe (pastorate, Oct. 7, 1934-Oct. 29, 1944; b.1882, d.1944). Wolfe restored New Hope to a single church field. His energetic leadership increased church membership to 151. He began the collection offering box system on the back pew of the sanctuary, which gave an immediate boost to the church's finances. In 1938, Wolfe oversaw the church's purchase of the New Hope public school building which had been closed for two years. A fire on October 28, 1941 leveled the manse. Wolfe and his family took up residence in the old schoolhouse until a new manse was built. He expanded the Session and the Board of Deacons. New Trustees were added under Wolfe. He ably piloted the church through most of the years of World War II. Only death in the pulpit ended Wolfe's

ministry at New Hope.⁴⁸

The Session expressed its deep affection for Wolfe in a glowing resolution:

"We, the Session of New Hope Church, in appreciation of the faithful and unique services of our beloved Pastor Rev. W. D. Wolfe whom God, in his infinite wisdom, called to his heavenly reward from the pulpit in the midst of a sermon on Oct. 29, 1944, desire to express our deep sense of loss to the Church and Community.

And whereas, we are deeply grateful for his having given us this Christian leader for ten years of consecrated service, and through our tears we rejoice that he has been promoted to a higher realm of service and joy in the eternal Presence of the Master whom he loved so deeply and served with all his heart and soul.

Therefore Be It Resolved, that we extend our sincere sympathy to all the bereaved ones and our people in that God of all Grace will bind up their broken hearts, and give each one the comfort and consolation that they need; and that a copy of this memorial be entered on the Church Records, a copy be sent to the 'Christian Observer,' and a copy sent to the family."⁴⁹

The kind words eased the pain, but the grief at Wolfe's loss lingered long after his death.

The post-war era swept New Hope into a new age with a new minister, John Henry Knight (pastorate, Nov. 4, 1945-Jan. 7, 1951; b.1907, d.1985). Knight's pastorate thrust the church out of its rural sluggishness. Immediately after arriving, he got the church to establish a budget process, foregoing the old collection box. He worked with the Session to convert the old schoolhouse into the church's Educational Building. Under Knight's leadership, the church

implemented a massive increase in the number of Deacons. Knight made possible a number of major gifts to the church's sanctuary. He guided two of New Hope's sons into the ministry. Membership reached 200 again for the first time since the early 1900's. J. H. Knight started the church on the long road to modernization.⁵⁰

Samuel Dwight Winn's maintenance ministry (pastorate, Apr. 8, 1951-June 21, 1953; b.1881, d.1954) slowed the church's growth. The church used Winn's years to consolidate the gains made during the previous pastorate. Church membership only crept up to 212. Age, more than anything else, curtailed Winn's efforts at the church. He was a 70 year old retired missionary when he was called, making it necessary for the church to renew his call on a yearly basis. While Winn was at the church, the church even considered returning to the offering box system. One progressive step Winn did initiate was the incorporation of the church. Finally, his declining health led to the close of his service at New Hope.⁵¹

John Hamilton Buzhardt's call (pastorate, Aug. 1, 1954-Mar. 14, 1961; b.1896, d.1985) contrasted sharply with the church's previous pastor. Buzhardt came to New Hope from the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, N.C. Church membership rose to 251 during his years. He had the church initiate the rotation system for Elders and Deacons. Session meetings began with a regular study of the Book of Church Order under Buzhardt. By 1960, benevolences soared to \$3,911 from \$1,862 in 1954. New Hope pledged \$6,006 to the capital funds campaign for the new St. Andrews Presbyterian College in Laurinburg, N. C. Changes were made in the church's music leadership, clerical staff was added, and new custodial help was secured. The preservation of the church's historical records received attention from Buzhardt. Traditional Sunday night services came to a halt on a regular

basis. The vision of a new sanctuary began to be dreamed of by the church. Even surgery for Buzhardt in March, 1959 did not slow down the church's forward movement. Only a call to Ninety Six, S. C. terminated his accomplishments with the congregation.⁵²

The church turned from a minister nearing retirement to a minister early in his career, with Edwin Oscar Byrd, Jr. (pastorate, Sept. 1, 1961-Mar. 20, 1966; b.1933, d.-). Membership vaulted to 294 by 1966. The vast majority of New Hope's energies and resources with Byrd were expended on the construction of the church's third sanctuary. Byrd handed the Wednesday evening prayer meetings over to the Elders. By 1964, he eliminated evening services entirely. He held the church's benevolences at \$3,970. A two year rotation for the Clerk of the Session was established. During his stay, he instituted the committee system in the church. He oversaw the upgrading of the Educational Building, the graveling of the church's parking lot, and the sale of the old pulpit furniture and pews. After five extremely active years Byrd moved, only months after the completion of the new sanctuary.⁵³

Archie Davis (pastorate, Oct. 9, 1966-Aug. 31-1969; b.1925, d.-) stepped into the aftermath of New Hope's building campaign, the turbulence of the sixties, and the ongoing crisis between the church and two spinster sisters. Davis' able pastoral direction brought the Session to grips with the conflicts. An historical repository was built in 1967, the Burwell Historical Chapel. As a result of the internal church struggles of the late 1960's, the membership slipped slightly to 280 by 1969. Davis constantly wrestled with the lingering residue of the expansion program and the finances to pay for the project. Despite money problems, Davis managed to keep church benevolences up to \$3,082 a year. He led the Session to hire the church's first Director of Christian Education in 1968,

Miss Donna Bezdek. In June, 1969 Davis received a standing ovation from the Session for his sermon series on the Ten Commandments. He encouraged New Hope to join with Bethesda United Methodist and Friendship Baptist churches in supporting a community "Teen Center." After three arduous years, Davis left for warmer climes in Florida.⁵⁴

Strife intensified with the ministry of David Carlton White (pastorate, Dec. 14, 1969-Apr. 1, 1973; b.1935, d.-). He increased the congregation to 303 by 1972, but he fomented serious division within the congregation. White radically altered the church's historical pattern of benevolences. Giving eventually reached \$3,873 for causes outside of the denomination. Finally, the Session said they "...refused not to back Presbyterian benevolent askings."⁵⁵ White spent a great deal of time attending meetings of "Concerned Presbyterians," the "Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship," and the Steering Committee for the "Continuing Presbyterian Church." On the more favorable side, he got the church involved in the Lay Witness Mission. He supported the construction of the church's Activities Building, the paving of the church parking lot, and the addition of property for the church cemetery. White remained embroiled in turmoil the entire time he was at New Hope. After a little over three years, White asked to be dismissed from the call and the Presbyterian Church in the United States.⁵⁶

Under William Frye Summers, Jr. (pastorate, Mar. 1, 1974-July 31, 1979; b.1945, d.-), New Hope gradually returned to the denomination's mainstream. Summers reestablished the church's connectiveness and effectiveness with the congregation and the Presbytery. He aided the Session in restoring Presbyterian benevolences instead of independent causes. Unrest during the preceding years dropped church membership under Summers to 252. By the end of the seventies,

Summers was nudging the membership back towards 300. As with ministers going back to the early 1900's, he too faced financial difficulties. He made the church's pulpit available for candidates seeking calls and he assisted the church in getting involved in the nation's Bicentennial. In 1978, he constituted the first church committee to decide what to do about the church's Educational Building. He worked tirelessly to get New Hope to participate in international missions.⁵⁷ The congregation approached the eighties with a measure of anticipation after Summers' dependable service.

The church entered the decade with an inauspicious start, led by Robert LeRoy Hennessee (pastorate, Dec. 1, 1979-June 30, 1981; b.1931, d.-). Hennessee's brief stint at New Hope contributed solid preaching, some nationally known guest speakers, and other organizational improvements. However, Hennessee's considerable skills were offset by individual difficulties that hindered his effectiveness. After barely eighteen months, Hennessee resigned his pastorate at New Hope.⁵⁸

Most of the eighties were under the sound leadership of James Mitchell Cockerham (pastorate, Apr. 1, 1982-July 31, 1988; b.1941, d.-). Cockerham rebuilt the congregation's confidence. While he was pastor, New Hope's membership again surged above the 300 mark. The upsurge in suburban growth in the area allowed the church to visibly expand. New Hope finally came to grips with the issue of the Educational Building, doing a major renovation project on the old schoolhouse in 1984. The remodeling updated the church's facilities for the twenty-first century. New programs were begun. A cemetery trust was established. With the help of First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia, a D.C.E. was hired. Cockerham markedly strengthened the church during his pastorate.⁵⁹

The last decade of the twentieth century gave New Hope a new minister, Brian Dale Weger (pastorate, July

15, 1989-; b.1946, d.-). Weger's leadership helped the church's membership to climb to 375 by 1992. He enabled the church to carry out much needed and long delayed maintenance. His efforts produced the Bicentennial history as the church prepared to mark its 200th birthday. Weger reawakened the church's sense of promise, begun by those founding fathers and mothers late in the eighteenth century.⁶⁰

New Hope's ministers left a varied legacy. The early men carved a memorable place for the church in the community. A number of the clergymen accentuated the importance of education for the congregation and the area by running schools or teaching school. Others conveyed the necessity of order and discipline to the church. A couple of the men were writers of some accomplishment. Another was an able administrator and church organizer. Some did not mesh well with the congregation; others had close and loving pastorates. With a couple of notable exceptions, the church did not enjoy long tenures from ministers. Precious few of the men were innovators. In most instances, the ministers did become integral parts of the community. Most of the clergymen offered New Hope sure and stable leadership through hard times as well as prosperous times.

The men came from widely differing backgrounds. Revolutionary War soldiers, Confederate Chaplains, educational enthusiasts, scholars, farmers, Korean Missionaries, denominational transfers, even traditionalists - none of New Hope's pastors fit the same mold. Some were in excellent health and others were frail and feeble; some were elderly and looking towards retirement and others were young and only starting careers. From 1793, New Hope rarely sought the same attributes in its ministers.

SONS AND DAUGHTERS

New Hope has had four sons become ministers of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church. Others have begun the journey to the pastorate at New Hope, but only four men have completed the ordination and installation process from New Hope. The church has faithfully contributed to the ministry of Christ's church.

Nearly one hundred years passed before one of New Hope's sons entered the ministry. However, William Thomas Hall did not come under care of Presbytery through New Hope. Hall, the son of the church's long-time minister, James Davidson Hall, joined New Hope on October 25, 1851. He became a minister only after he left New Hope, his father having moved by the time he acknowledged his call.⁶¹ Hall, a graduate of Davidson College and Columbia Theological Seminary, served pastorates in Lancaster and Ebenezer, S.C., Canton, Miss., and Lynchburg, Va. During the time, he also was a Chaplain in the Confederate Army. Hall ended his career as Professor of Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary. In 1902 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the P.C.U.S. in Jackson, Miss.⁶² W. T. Hall led a distinguished career as a minister, which began at New Hope.

The first true son of the church to become a minister was William Clarence Underwood. W. C. Underwood was born in Lowell, N.C. on August 19, 1869. The family attended the New Hope church until moving into the area of Hopewell Presbyterian Church.⁶³ Underwood came under care of the Session while at New Hope and was recommended to Mecklenburg Presbytery as a candidate.⁶⁴ He was educated at Davidson College and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. Part of Underwood's ministerial training took place at

Hampton-Sydney College near Farmville, Virginia before the Seminary was moved to Richmond. During Seminary he paid for his schooling by acting as the Stated Supply for Appomattox and other churches. Licensed by West Hanover Presbytery in the spring of 1899, Underwood was ordained by Fort Worth Presbytery at the Broadway Presbyterian Church in Fort Worth, Texas on May 9, 1901.⁶⁵ His active pastorates were: Stated Supply of Second Church, Rock Hill, S.C., 1900-1901; Pastor of Grandview and Itasca churches, Tex., 1901-1902; Pastor of Denmark church and S.S. of Saltillo and Union churches, Denmark, Tenn., 1902-1905; Pastor of Carrollton, Miss. church, 1905-1912; Pastor of Clio, Ala. church, 1912-1917; Pastor of Alexander City, Ala. church, 1917-1919; Pastor of DeKalb, Miss. church, 1919-1920; Indian Trail and Siler churches, N.C., 1921-1923; and North Charlotte church, Charlotte, N.C., 1924-1928.⁶⁶

Underwood suffered health problems all his life. His physical handicaps severely limited his ministry, eventually forcing him to give up full-time service in the 1920's. For some years, he served as the Stated Supply at the Pineville church and later the Robinson church in Mecklenburg Presbytery. On other occasions, Underwood filled various vacant pulpits. He died on November 7, 1943.⁶⁷

New Hope's second son to enter the ministry was Raymond Howard Ratchford. He was born in Gastonia, N.C. on February 4, 1892 and grew up in the New Hope church.⁶⁸ On April 6, 1913 he appeared before the Session to come under the care of Kings Mountain Presbytery.⁶⁹ Ratchford received his formal education at Davidson College, graduating in 1917, and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va., graduating in 1920. Licensed by Kings Mountain Presbytery in May, 1920, Ratchford was ordained on July 25, 1920 by Albemarle Presbytery at the Fountain Presbyterian Church.⁷⁰ Six weeks later he was installed as the

pastor of the Farmville Presbyterian Church, the call being a two-church charge. He stayed only one year before moving to the McDowell and Brewington churches in Harmony Presbytery, S.C., where he remained from 1921 to 1939. From South Carolina he returned to Kings Mountain Presbytery, serving the Castanea and Stanley Creek churches from 1939 to 1946. Ratchford stayed within the Presbytery, moving to the Goshen Presbyterian Church and serving until his death in 1959. He was buried in the New Hope cemetery.⁷¹

New Hope's third and fourth sons entered the ministry within a year of each other. James Edward Craig heeded the call in 1947 and George Edward Dameron heeded the call in 1948. Both came under care with the same minister, John H. Knight.

"Eddie." as J. E. Craig was known, was born in Cramerton, N.C. on October 22, 1925. Following his early years in the Cramerton Presbyterian Church, he transferred to the New Hope church. Craig was received by the Session as a candidate on July 6, 1947.⁷² At the October meeting of Kings Mountain Presbytery that same year, meeting at Long Creek Presbyterian Church in Bessemer City, N.C., Craig was approved as a candidate.⁷³ He was educated at Bob Jones University and Columbia Theological Seminary. Following his theological training, Craig was examined for Licensure and Ordination on July 29, 1951 to the Hephzibah Presbyterian Church of his home Presbytery. Craig's former minister, J. H. Knight, preached his ordination sermon. His first pastorate lasted three years. Pastorates followed at the Effingham, S.C. church, 1954-1958; the Paw Creek church, Charlotte, N.C., 1958-1966; the Easley, S.C. church, 1966-1974; and the First Church of Orangeburg, S.C., 1974-1978. Craig closed his ministry as the Executive Presbyter of PeeDee Presbytery, S.C. He died on September 5, 1987 and was buried in the New Hope cemetery.⁷⁴

Craig's contemporary, George Edward Dameron, was

born March 29, 1929 in Gastonia, N.C.⁷⁵ He spent his entire childhood and youth in the New Hope church. Less than a year after Craig came before the Session, George E. Dameron applied to come under the Session's care, being received June 13, 1948.⁷⁶ Kings Mountain Presbytery, meeting on July 13, 1948 at the Adams Memorial Presbyterian Church in Gastonia, N.C., received Dameron under its care. He began his education, like Craig, at Bob Jones University. However, he transferred and finished at High Point College in 1951. Dameron graduated from Columbia Theological Seminary in 1954. J. H. Knight, his pastor when he came under care, preached his ordination sermon. The Presbytery of Atlanta ordained Dameron to the Stockbridge and Kelley churches on July 6, 1954.⁷⁷ Dameron remained at the two churches until 1960. He moved to the Pinelanda church of Miami, Fla., staying from 1960 through 1971. After his pastorate in Florida, he returned to Georgia. He accepted the call to the Wee Kirk Covenant Church of Atlanta, Ga. for two years, 1971-1973. Dameron moved to the Grace Covenant Church of Conyers, Ga. in 1973 and still serves the church today.⁷⁸

The church endorsed one other candidate for the ministry during the course of its two hundred years. Victoria Louise Moss, New Hope's D.C.E. from 1985 to 1988, was approved as a candidate by the Session on August 15, 1988. She resigned early in 1989, transferring her candidacy and membership.⁷⁹ No other sons or daughters of the church entered the ministry directly under the church's oversight.

Other members from New Hope have considered the ministry. However, none have come under the care, either being endorsed by the Session or the Presbytery. The church realistically can only boast of four sons that have gone into the pastorate.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO LED

James W. Reid

Born

June 25, 1816

Died

May 15, 1894

Aged 77 yrs. 10 ms. 20 ds.

At the age of 16 he joined New Hope Presbyterian Church, a private member for 15 yrs, an elder for 47 yrs, for many years clerk of the session, and also Supt. of the Sabbath School. In the discharge of this was his motive.

Omma ad Dei gloriam

"All things to the glory of God"¹

Thus reads the tombstone of James William Reid, the longest serving Clerk of the Session in the history of New Hope Presbyterian Church. Reid served as clerk for thirty-eight years (1853-1891).² Elected an Elder in 1851, he became the clerk only two years later. He remained clerk until he transferred from the church at the end of 1891. Reid nursed New Hope through the Civil War, Reconstruction, and Industrialization. He faithfully functioned as an officer of the church for more than half of his life.

J. W. Reid generated an incredible record during his years as New Hope's clerk. The church received over 500 members during his term. He helped the church grow to a membership of 140 by the time he resigned as clerk and transferred his membership. He was the church's first Elder commissioner, attending the Presbyterian Church in the United States General Assembly in Birmingham, Alabama.³ Reid went to Presbytery meetings when they were in the middle of the war, when they were far from home, and when no one else

could go. His life was inextricably bound up with the church.

Only brief glimpses of Reid's family life penetrated his church work. He was married. Reid and his wife had at least one son and one daughter. His son was a merchant in Lowell, N.C.;⁴ his daughter married Dr. Frank Robinson, who joined New Hope in 1877.⁵ Reid's son-in-law was later instrumental in getting the church to establish a Presbyterian church in Lowell. He served two terms in the North Carolina state legislature. Reid let little of his personal life carry over into his church work.

After forty-two years without missing a business meeting of the Session, Reid resigned as Clerk. His wife's declining health was the reason he relinquished his position as the Clerk of Session. He and his wife went to live with their daughter and son-in-law in Lowell. Reluctantly, Reid transferred his membership to the Lowell church. Nearly three years later, after a long bout with cancer, he returned permanently, being buried in the church's cemetery.

Equally renowned as James W. Reid was Samuel Gingles. Gingles was the first recorded Elder at New Hope.

Samuel Gingles began his journey of faith in Bethel Presbyterian Church in the York District of South Carolina. Gingles made his profession of faith in 1812 at the age of twenty-nine. A year later, he was ordained and installed as an Elder under the pastorate of James S. Adams. New Hope "...being near his own residence, he immediately transferred his membership..." to the church.⁶ However, Gingles served as an Elder in both churches for a number of years. Only after New Hope was returned to the care of the Presbytery of Concord in 1828 did Gingles function exclusively as an Elder for New Hope.

Gingles served the church as an Elder for more than forty years.⁷ His ordination, as with all church

officers, entailed life-time service. He participated in Presbytery regularly for New Hope. During his tenure, he attended presbytery meetings in Bethel, Morganton, and Concord Presbyteries.⁸ Together with James C. Baird, he constituted the first Session of the Church. He made pastoral visits to both blacks and whites.⁹ Gingles helped resolve the first disputes to come before the Session. At one time, he acted as the Clerk of the Session at Bethel church, but he never served in that capacity at New Hope. He supported the enlargement of the church's Session to four members in 1843. At the same time he sought, along with Baird, to establish Deacons in the church. His efforts to increase the size of the Session succeeded, but his efforts to organize a diaconate failed.¹⁰ Gingles' efforts went a long way in stabilizing New Hope's Session.

The chronicling of the church's Session was a process that took several years to evolve. Session minutes originally were taken by the Moderator. Only with the appointment of Elder Winchester Pegram as Clerk of the Session did Elders begin recording minutes.¹¹ Under the supervision of minister William N. Morrison, the church initiated its first Session book¹² and church members roll.¹³ The earliest minutes were "...in a very imperfect state--containing only a list of their members--without any Sessional records....(the Presbytery of Morganton advised) that these Sessions be indulged for the present."¹⁴ Flawed or not, these early records were lost, according to tradition, by long-time clerk J. W. Reid.¹⁵ Not until the 1840's did the church begin to register its proceedings with any regularity.

The Session kept minimal records. In most instances, the records were all too brief. Usually, the Session met only once or twice a year. Entries were typically confined to membership admissions and dismissions. Even during the Baird-Hoffman dispute in

1843, the Session only met a total of five times.¹⁶ Not until the appointment of Reid as Clerk did minutes get penned more consistently.

During the 1850's, the church experienced major changes for Elders, Deacons and clerks. In 1851, Winchester Pegram and his family moved to Dallas, N.C., leaving the clerk's position vacant.¹⁷ The Pegram's move also opened the way for the election of two additional Elders, James W. Reid and Samuel W. Craig. Elder Robert A. Beaty replaced Pegram as clerk, but poor health soon forced him to surrender the position.¹⁸ With Beaty's resignation as clerk, Reid became clerk, a position he was to hold for nearly four decades. Following the church's effort to elect Deacons in 1843, the responsibility was neglected until 1859. Only at the insistence of Concord Presbytery did New Hope establish the office of Deacon. On February 13, 1859, the church elected the first Deacons: S. F. D. Baird, Eli Cox, J. H. Ford, John E. Neagle, Rob't H. Reid, and Augustus L. Henderson. All were ordained six weeks later.¹⁹ In one sweeping gesture, the church created a Board of Deacons. The decade of progress made by the church's officers was slowed considerably by the Civil War.

During the war, the Session barely managed to keep functioning. Reid attended Presbytery meetings, but no other Elder attended from New Hope.²⁰ Surprisingly though, at the height of the war, three Elders were elected. However, only two were ordained, the third being away in the Confederate Army.²¹ The drain on manpower by the Confederacy effectively crippled the church's leadership. Little or no progress was made by the church's officers during the conflict.

Immediately following the war, no significant changes occurred amongst Elders and Deacons. Elder Robert A. Beaty asked the Session to allow him to take the unprecedented step of resigning as an Elder. He said in a letter he was "...old and infirm." The

Session agreed in the abstract, but was concerned about his neglect of public ordinances. Deciding not to act precipitously on Beaty's request, the Session sent minister B. L. Beall to visit informally with the Elder. Beall received no satisfactory explanation for Beaty's disregard of his obligations as an Elder. Finally, sensing that nothing would be gained by prolonging the affair, the Session capitulated and relieved R. A. Beaty as an Elder, due to age and infirmity.²² While conducting the deliberations over Beaty, the Session called for an "...increase in eldership without delay."²³ Two men were nominated, but one was found not to be a member of the church. The other, William R. McLean, was elected. Even with a new Elder, the Session struggled through lean post-war years.

The Reconstruction era severely taxed the Session. In May, 1867, the Session deposed Dr. John E. Neagle as a Deacon for intoxication and suspended him from the church for six months. New Hope's Session followed the action with a resolution citing the need to ascertain the future fitness of church officers.²⁴ The serving officers did not heed their own admonition. Five years later, Elder W. R. McLean was deposed from the Session for the sins of intemperance and neglect of his official duties for two years. He was suspended from the church indefinitely until he gave evidence of satisfactory repentance.²⁵ Earlier, the Session dismissed Elder William M. Nolen to Union Presbyterian Church. A short while later, the Session approved Elder William G. Ford's dismissal to the same church.²⁶ Sandwiched in between these losses was the death of long standing Elder S. W. Craig.²⁷ The late 1860's and the early 1870's went hard on New Hope's Session.

New officers arose to carry the church through the difficult times. In July, 1873, William G. Ford, J. Logan Stowe, and John N. Hanna were elected Elders. A month later "At a meeting of the male members of the

church the following persons were appointed Trustees of New Hope Church: William G. Ford, Jr., J. Logan Stowe, and G. Washington Ragan."²⁸ Near the close of the 1870's, the congregation added three new Deacons.²⁹ The six officers injected a fresh spirit into New Hope.

During the last two decades of the Nineteenth Century, the church's officers dealt with everything from expansion to excommunication. The Session began the 1880's by suspending Deacon Thaddeus Clinton from the sacraments and the exercise of office for six months. He was found guilty of "profane swearing," fornication, and intoxication.³⁰ In 1886, the congregation elected three new Deacons. The same year saw the Session start a Sabbath School, with Clerk J. W. Reid serving as the first Superintendent.³¹ Two years later the Session adopted a resolution to establish a Presbyterian Church at Lowell, N.C. Elders J. W. Reid and J. L. Stowe served on the committee to create the Lowell church.³² Throughout the decade of the 1880's, the Session met irregularly at the South Point church-schoolhouse to receive members. Within the congregation the Session had to continually cope with problems of profanity, fornication, habitual drunkenness, and nonattendance.³³ The 1890's opened with the Session granting dismissions to members wishing to unite with the new church in Belmont, N.C. Under authority from the Session, former minister W. E. McIlwain "...dedicated the new Chapel recently built in the southern part of the congregation....also the privilege of dedicating the new church at Belmont when finished."³⁴ Two more Elders were added to the Session in 1891. Sadly, the same year witnessed the end of J. W. Reid's clerkship at New Hope. On January 9, 1892, the Session appointed John M. Gaston as new Clerk of the Session in the same meeting J. W. Reid and his wife were dismissed to the Lowell church.³⁵ The congregation agreed to the construction of a new Session house in 1894.³⁶ Despite the Session's

progress, problems still simmered within the church. The Elders constantly had to deal with whiskey, gaugers, and intoxication. Finally, in 1897, the Session had a resolution read from the pulpit against dancing, intemperance, and nonattendance. The officers asked members not to engage in "...conduct unbecoming Christ's disciples and a violation of Christian vows," to "...leave off this evil habit," and to "...remove the cause..." for not being in church.³⁷ The century ended in much the same way that the last twenty years had gone.

New Hope's officers entered the Twentieth Century with renewed optimism. The Session forged ahead in 1901 and called a fulltime minister for the first time. During the next year, the church added two more Elders and two more Deacons.³⁸ In 1904, the Session appointed two new Trustees, E. P. Lewis and T. L. Allison.³⁹ Then, in an unprecedented move, the Session restored A. L. Guy as a member, after a nine-year suspension for being a storekeeper. The amazing feature of Guy's restoration was that in later years he would become a church officer and eventually the church treasurer. Later in the same year, the officers cleared the way for the formal organization of McLean's Chapel as El Bethel Presbyterian Church, dismissing ten to become charter members of El Bethel church.⁴⁰ Success for the Elders was also tempered by recurring difficulties.

The early 1900's engulfed the Session in minor problems and major troubles. Minister J. B. Cochran and the Elders had to handle the Franklin W. Leeper-John N. Dickson trial, with the case dragging on for over a year. Time and again, the Session had to discipline members for dancing.⁴¹ In 1906, the Session lost clerk J. M. Gaston and his wife by transfer to Lowell church.⁴² A little over two years later, the Session authorized Treasurer Tom Ford to borrow enough money to pay the pastor's salary. The move signaled a financial plight that would afflict the church for

years to come.⁴³ At the close of the decade, Deacons John V. Hanna and John N. Dickson tendered their resignations. The Elders deferred action until the Session had time to consider the matter. After deliberating two weeks, the Elders called a congregational meeting to accede to the request.⁴⁴ The decade closed with considerably less enthusiasm than it began.

Minister R. S. Burwell's arrival returned a measure of stability to the Session. On three different occasions, under Burwell, the congregation increased the number of Deacons. The church added seven Deacons in all, one of whom was A. L. Guy. During the same time, the congregation elected two Elders.⁴⁵ For only the second time in the church's history, the Session took one of its sons under care as a candidate for the ministry. In 1914, the church's first son to enter the ministry visited with the Session.⁴⁶ The only strain for the Elders during Burwell's tenure was the recurring financial anxieties. Unable to fully pay the pastor's salary, the Session sent a delegation of three Elders to Presbytery to plead its case.⁴⁷ The disposition of the request was never recorded. However, Burwell remained at the church for two more years. Immediately prior to Burwell's departure, the Session accepted the resignation of clerk, John W. Lowry and elected a new clerk, W. Thomas Ford.⁴⁸ With the end of Burwell's pastorate, the Session entered a period of distressing times.

The close of World War I and the years immediately following the war brought a whole series of unexpected problems for the church's officers. Little more than a year after electing W. T. Ford clerk, the Session had to elect another clerk, John M. Kendrick. Long-time Elder J. N. Hanna asked to be excused from regular attendance at Session meetings on account of "...increasing infirmities." The Session acquiesced, but said the concession did not curtail Hanna's duties

and privileges.⁴⁹ With the war's end in November, 1918, the influenza epidemic struck. The Session literally closed the church for a month. When the church reopened, the church's finances were "...sorely deranged."⁵⁰ The Deacons had to canvas the congregation for the apportionment to the Synodical Home, Home Missions, and Foreign Missions. Matters continued to deteriorate for the Session. In the spring of 1919, the Session directed the Deacons "...to take such steps as may be found to be necessary for the welfare of the church."⁵¹ That fall, the minister had to call the church's finances to the congregation's attention again. By the beginning of the twenties, the Session was caught in a downward spiral.

A new minister in 1921, Archie McLauchlin, provided little relief for the church's officers. The Session had to hold three congregational meetings before two new Elders could be elected.⁵² Throughout the 1920's the Session steadily dismissed members. Benevolences declined from a high of \$598 in 1923 to a low of \$178 in 1928.⁵³ By the close of the decade, the Session had to once again consider grouping with another church. The only hopeful sign during McLauchlin's pastorate was the 1927 election of two Elders, Lyndon Wilson and William D. Lewis.⁵⁴ New Hope's addition of these two men foreshadowed the start of the upswing in the church's fortunes.

Less than a year after W. D. Lewis' election as an Elder, he assumed the position of the Clerk of the Session. The choice of Lewis as clerk was to supply a stabilizing influence on the church for years to come. Lewis served the second longest clerkship in New Hope's existence, twenty-seven years (1927-1954). Under Lewis' guidance, the church revived, expanded, and became active in Presbytery. W. D. Lewis and his wife, Mabel, worked actively in most of the programs and organizations of the church. Mabel presided at different times over the Women's Missionary Society and

the Women of the Church. She taught Sunday School and headed the young people's organization for years. W. D., as he was known, helped his wife with the young people, served on pulpit nominating committees, and promoted Presbytery's acquisition of a church camp. Despite his lengthy tenure in Presbytery work, he never moderated Presbytery. Lewis returned a measure of stature to New Hope during his long career as Elder.⁵⁵

The beginning of Lewis' service as an officer also coincided with the onset of the Depression. However, unlike the nation's economic slump, the arrival of Lewis signaled none of the same downturn for New Hope. The Depression actually started the church on the road to recovery.

By the 1930's, the Session began to catch glimpses of progress. Two Deacons and an Elder, Fred Dixon, were added in the spring of 1929. Benevolences rebounded somewhat, rising to \$558 in 1931, but continued to go up and down for the rest of the decade.⁵⁶ The Session even began to experience a gradual increase in membership by the second half of the 1930's. An extensive renovation project was consummated by the Elders in 1932. Three years later, three new Trustees were appointed: Tom Glover, Sam Craig, and W. D. Lewis.⁵⁷ The thirties closed with the election of two Elders, Mott Dixon and Fred Ratchford.⁵⁸ During the Depression years the number of Elders was increased from four to six. In the midst of the nation's worst economic dilemma, the Session slowly put the church on sound footing.

World War II effected no immediate changes for the officers of New Hope. At the start of the war, the Board of Deacons only had three members. The Session as early as 1940 understood that more Deacons were needed, but refused to set a date for the election of the additional Deacons.⁵⁹ Finally, two Deacons were elected in the spring of 1943. At the same time, the Elders left the composition of the Session at six

members for the duration of the war. The Session struggled with membership during the years just prior to the nation's involvement in the war. At one point, the Elders sent out visitation teams to members, to "...show more interest in them and to stimulate them to more active allegiance to the church."⁶⁰ Under the Session's guidance, the church's benevolences recovered strongly. From 1939 to 1949, New Hope's outreach jumped from \$670 to \$2,152.⁶¹ One heartening note for the church was the Session's response to minister W. D. Wolfe's family following his death. Mrs. Wolfe was given everything in the offering box above \$25.00 and allowed to continue to use the manse until a new minister arrived. The war years largely wound up being a waiting period for the church's Elders and Deacons.

After the war, monumental upheavals reverberated throughout the Session and the Diaconate. In March, 1946, the congregation enacted a dramatic increase in the number of Deacons. The church enlarged the size of the Board from three to thirteen members. During the same series of congregational meetings, the Session was expanded to eight members.⁶² The enlargement of both bodies began a sharing in the leadership of the church that was to continue right up until the present time.

Significant changes in the post-war years occurred steadily for the church's officers. The Board of Deacons began to address the condition of the church's cemetery. Elder Fred Dixon attended General Assembly, the second Elder to do so from the church. Elders and Deacons raised money to pay the expenses of visiting evangelists for the church. The Session took two of its sons under care for the gospel ministry. In 1949, the Session initiated the discussion of the rotation of Deacons.⁶³ By the fifties, New Hope's officers were reshaping the very fabric of the church.

The boom years of the 1950's finally toppled the old patterns of leadership forever. In 1952, the Session added two Elders, Thomas P. Elrod and J.

Leonard Brandon. At the same time, the Diaconate was increased by four.⁶⁴ The additions kept the Session at eight, but boosted the Board of Deacons to fourteen. However, the Session failed in its intent to expand the Board of Deacons to fifteen. The following year, the Session split the Deacons treasurer's job; Benevolence and General. Shortly thereafter the Elders decided to incorporate the church in order to retain possession of its property. During the incorporation process, the Session had to nearly double the number of Trustees. In a typical move, the Session invited the Deacons to sit with the Elders to consider "...three men" as nominees as Trustees. The congregation confirmed the three nominees as Trustees, bringing the total to seven.⁶⁵ Incorporation began the regular turnover of the church's Trustees. In the same summer New Hope incorporated, the Session hired New Hope's first student intern. However, the Elders kept the move within the church family, employing church son, George Dameron. Late in 1954, the Session reinstated W. Sylvester Brandon as a member of the Session. Brandon's reinstallation as an active Elder indicated nothing extraordinary; the move only acknowledging he had returned to the community permanently. Two months later, the Session presided over the demise of an institution. W. D. Lewis resigned as the Clerk of the Session.⁶⁶ J. L. Brandon was elected clerk. Brandon's election marked the last time that one of the church's clerks would serve for an extended period of time. The following year, 1955, marked the acceleration of even faster change for the Elders and Deacons.

After more than 150 years of having life-time officers, the congregation altered the system. Surprisingly, the shift to the rotation of Elders and Deacons was supported by the Session. In April, 1955, the Session broached the subject of rotating officers. Typically, the matter was referred for study. Following two months of serious consideration, the

Elders recommended to the congregation the step be approved. At a congregational meeting in November of the same year, the church adopted the rotation system for the Board of Deacons, to become effective January 1, 1956. The congregation decided the Deacons would be alined in three classes of four members in each class.⁶⁷ Rotation immediately reduced the number of Deacons from fifteen to twelve. Earlier that same year, the Session approached the congregation to increase the number of Elders to match the number on the Board of Deacons. The congregation concurred. Five additional Elders were elected, the largest increase ever occurring for the Session.⁶⁸ The setting of the number on the Session and the Board of Deacons at twelve became a permanent fixture for both bodies. Still, the Session remained a position of life tenure. Finally, a little over two years later, the Session agreed to consider the rotation system for Elders. At first, the Session set the date of January 1, 1958 as the time for the changeover, then a month later the Elders gathered as a committee of the whole to reconsider the issue. Following lengthy discussion, the subject was deferred. In August, 1957, the Elders reached a landmark decision. After considerable debate, the Session determined: 1)a congregational meeting would be called September 8, 1957 to vote on the rotary system for Elders, 2)if approved the Elders would be placed in six classes of two Elders in each class, 3)there would be a one year retirement between an Elder's term of service, and 4)when an Elder reached 75 the Elder may ask to be made an Elder Emeritus. The congregation adopted the Session's recommendations by a vote of 73 to 26. Following the church's ratification, the Session divided into classes by lots.⁶⁹ The rotation system implemented a significant shift in the church's life.

While the debate over officer rotation dominated the church's life in the latter part of the fifties,

the issue did not preempt all other issues. One week prior to the vote on the rotation system, the Session placed before the congregation the matter of Sunday night services. By a nearly two-thirds majority, New Hope signaled a desire to end the evening services.⁷⁰ At every regularly scheduled Session meeting, the minister, J. H. Buzhardt, had the Elders spend time studying the Book of Church Order. The Session took the progressive step of endorsing a Bible course in the Belmont Schools. The Elders invited back the church's minister sons, J. E. Craig and G. E. Dameron, to lead special services. In the same year, 1958, the Session recommended T. H. Sherrill as the church's first Elder Emeritus.⁷¹ The next year, the Elders decided any officer filling an unexpired term would be able to be elected to a full term without sitting out for a year. New Hope's Session closed out the decade with a flourish by asking the Board of Deacons in December, 1959 to prepare a building program.⁷² Going from the fifties to the sixties never slowed the advancements being made by the church's officers.

The dawn of the 1960's only signaled a shift in direction for the church's Elders and Deacons. During the first half of the decade, the officers were consumed by the building program that the Elders requested the Deacons to initiate. After four months of deliberations, the Deacons recommended the Elders call for a new church sanctuary rather than remodeling the old facility. Acting upon the Deacon's advice, the Session constituted a New Church Planning Committee.⁷³ For the next five years, the officers and members contended with the planning, construction and financing of a new sanctuary. The decision to build the new structure had unexpected ramifications for officers, members, and ministers.

Erecting the church's third sanctuary embroiled the Session in a dispute that simmered the entire time. Opposition from sisters Ida and Zoe Hoffman taxed the

Elders' patience. In May, 1963, the Session had to hold a called meeting to deal with the Hoffman's objections. At first, the sisters only protested the Planning Committee's use of the Women's Bible Class, furnished by the Hoffman family. The Session listened to the women's complaints, but affirmed the use of the classroom for the building program. For six months nothing happened; then the issue exploded. The Hoffman sisters denounced the minister, E. O. Byrd, Jr. The women demanded that Byrd come to their home to discuss the matter. Byrd refused to visit the sisters alone. He had the Session name three Elders as a committee to accompany him to the Hoffman's home. The Elders reported to the Session that the sisters: termed their appearance before the Session as a trial, were displeased with the minister's salary, criticized the Elders for acting as tellers at congregational meetings, denounced the new parking lot as unnecessary, thought that the minister's wife should not be church secretary, said that they complained to the Presbytery's Commission on the Minister and His Works, and announced that they had told members of the church their opinion and would continue to complain to others. Sensing the peace and unity of the church were threatened, the Session named another committee to meet with the Hoffmans. After meeting with the sisters, the second committee recounted that the women were willing to drop the matter, but the sisters would not concede they were wrong. After an uproarious six months, the Session thought the incident had finally been put to rest. Events only proved the officers wrong.⁷⁴

The brief respite was followed by further repercussions. Continued criticism by the Hoffmans induced the Chairman of the Building Committee to resign. Renewed recriminations by the Hoffmans forced the Session to hold another called meeting. Finally, the Elders voted to relieve Ida Hoffman of her duties as a member and secretary of the Building Committee, as

Historian of the church, and as Historian of the Women of the Church. Also, the officers insisted the Hoffmans return to the church all records, books, and minutes in their possession. The Session believed the matter was closed, at last, but events were once again to prove the Session wrong.⁷⁵

Despite the enormous amount of the Session's energy expended in the Hoffman dispute, other matters did not escape the Elders' attention. In 1961, the Session began wrestling with whether officers would only be men. Near the end of the same year, Elder John D. Elkins resigned, striking a damaging blow to the Building Committee. Fortunately, for the church and the building program, Elkins returned to the area early in the following year. The church wasted little time in reinstating Elkins as an Elder and, subsequently, as a member of the Building Committee. During the same spring, 1965, Elder J. L. Brandon became the third officer from New Hope to serve as a delegate to General Assembly.⁷⁶ The Session hired Leroy Arnold from the office of the Synod of North Carolina to direct the church's building fund drive. A Cemetery Committee was established. The Session authorized the purchase of new office equipment. Surveyors were employed to make a definitive plot of the church's property. In 1964, after grappling for several years with the issue of the church's Sexton, the Session decided no member would be hired for the position.⁷⁷ The Session responsibly dealt with the day-to-day affairs of the church, even in the midst of the larger, overriding issues.

The mid-sixties precipitated a whole new series of problems for New Hope's officers. Initially, the church had to cope with a massive turnover among the Trustees. In December, 1964, four long-time Trustees resigned and three younger Trustees were elected.⁷⁸ The next year, troubled by church and national trends, the Session decided to send no money to "The National Council of Churches."⁷⁹ A little over two years later,

the Elders encountered another dispute with the Hoffman sisters. The Session, to its credit, did not retreat from any of the difficulties.

Events with the Hoffmans led to a new building as well as unresolved differences. The friction between the officers and the Hoffmans brought about the Burwell Historical Chapel. However, the Session had to reject funds for landscaping around the chapel in order to maintain the proper authority over the project. With the historical chapel built and the beautification of the grounds curtailed, the Session's clash with the Hoffmans finally came to an end.⁸⁰

The late 1960's were an unusual time for the church's officers. In 1966, the congregation elected Mrs. William T. (Dollie) McLean as a Trustee. She was the first woman to break the all-male hold on church offices.⁸¹ Similarly, the Session hired Miss Donna Bezdek as the church's first D.C.E. in 1968.⁸² At the same time, the Session began a gradual conservative drift. The Session sent a resolution to Presbytery condemning union presbyteries and synods. Minister D. C. White encouraged the Elders to abandon the church's long-standing policy of support for denominational benevolences. The congregation adopted a paper opposing organic union with the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. In the same paper, the church said it should retain direct control of its property.⁸³ As the sixties drew to a close, the difficulties did not subside for the church's officers.

The 1970's began with turmoil, but by the end of the decade a measure of relief resulted for the Elders and Deacons. After White resigned as minister, the Session defeated a motion to call a congregational meeting to have the church leave the denomination.⁸⁴ The same year, 1973, witnessed the loss of several officers over the church's unwillingness to leave the P.C.U.S.⁸⁵ During the next couple of years, the officers slowly returned a measure of harmony to the

congregation. In 1975, the church nominated its first woman as a Deacon. The following year the Session dropped the non-denominational benevolences from the church's budget. Finally, in 1978, the congregation elected Mrs. Frank (Lois) Smith as a Deacon. Mrs. Smith became the first woman to actively sit on one of the church's governing bodies.⁸⁶ The all-male bastion of the Diaconate was ended, but not the Session. Towards the end of the seventies, the Session instituted the yearly rotation of Trustees. The Elders created a Perpetual Care Cemetery Trust.⁸⁷ By the beginning of the 1980's the church's officers once again had a sense of the church's future.

In recent years, the Elders and Deacons encountered more successes than failures. Early in the eighties, the Elders moved the church to corporate directors. After a problem with minister, R. L. Hennessee, the Session exhibited a real depth of caring. Mrs. Hennessee and the children were allowed to remain in the manse until a new minister was called. The Session opened the church's pulpit to female candidates. Elders' terms of office were reduced from six to four years. Eventually, both Elders' and Deacons' terms were set at three years. Then, the unimaginable was achieved; a woman was elected Elder. Mrs. Fred (Nellie) Stowe became the first woman on the Session. The Session endorsed Elder J. L. Brandon a second time as a delegate to General Assembly. An overture was sent by the Session to Concord Presbytery requesting that the Montreat Historical Foundation be retained. A bit later the Session studied, but rejected the unicameral system. In 1988 the Elders endorsed D.C.E. Victoria Moss as a candidate for the ministry from New Hope. Mrs. Moss was the first woman to be taken under care by the church's Session.⁸⁸ The eighties reaffirmed the importance and responsibilities of the church's officers.

New Hope's Elders and Deacons have left a legacy of

faithfulness and toughness. The Session has faced innumerable difficult situations -- involving members, ministers, and officers. Through all of the years the men, at first, and more recently, the women, have rendered decisions with firmness and compassion. Both the Session and the Diaconate have served the church well through two centuries of progress, upheaval, and tranquility.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER THREE

1. The inscription on the tombstone of J. W. Reid in the cemetery of the New Hope Presbyterian Church. New Hope Presbyterian Church, New Hope Presbyterian Church Cemetery Index (hereafter referred to as the Cemetery Index) (Gastonia: Publisher Unknown, 1976), p. 71.

2. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Congregational Meetings, Vol. I, Aug. 20, 1853, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., page unnumbered and NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Jan. 9, 1892, p.110.

3. This is part of an obituary for J. A. Reid inserted at the back of the minutes. NHPC, Session Minutes Vol. II, pp. 155-158.

4. "Then there was William Harrison Reid, son of James William and Mary Dicey Ratchford Reid. He went with the call-up of 17-year olds in those desperate days not long before the end. He died near Goldsboro, North Carolina, I believe." Frank Hand, Personal Letter, April 25, 1992.

5. Dr. Frank P. Robinson joined New Hope as a transfer from Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville, Kentucky. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Sept. 22, 1877, p. 167.

6. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, J. W. Reid Obituary, pp. 155-158.

7. Samuel Gingles is the only grave marked Gingles

in the church's cemetery. Cemetery Index, p. 30.

8. Presbytery of Bethel (hereafter referred to as BP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Sept. 30, 1825, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 13; Presbytery of Morganton (hereafter referred to as MP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Oct. 11, 1839, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 117; and Presbytery of Concord (hereafter referred to as CP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. II, Apr. 6, 1831, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 228.

9. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, Aug. 20, 1840, p. 68 and May 20, 1843, pp. 84-87.

10. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Congregational Meetings, Vol. I, Aug. 22, 1841-June 23, 1843, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., pages unnumbered.

11. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, May 20, 1843, p. 84.

12. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Aug. 17, 1836, p. 27.

13. John B. Cochran, Historical Sketch of the New Hope Presbyterian Church (Gastonia: Loftin & Co., Printers, 1906), p. 18.

14. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Mar. 16, 1837, p. 33.

15. Cochran, op. cit., p. 18.

16. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, May 2, 1843-Sept. 30, 1843, pp. 80-92.

17. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, June 10, 1851, p. 131.

18. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. I, Aug. 20, 1853, pages unnumbered.

19. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Feb. 13, 1859, p. 203.

20. CP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. VII, Aug. 20, 1863, p. 37.

21. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, July 19, 1862-Aug. 3, 1862, pp. 204-205.

22. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, June 10, 1866-July 8, 1866, pp. 110-111.
23. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, June 24, 1866, p. 110.
24. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, May 11, 1867-June 2, 1867, pp. 118-119.
25. The charges against McLean were: 1) he had been seen drunk twice at the Dallas Courthouse, and 2) he had neglected his Sessional duties. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Apr. 27, 1872-May 26, 1872, pp. 140-142.
26. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Aug. 14, 1870 and Mar. 12, 1876, pp. 126 and 162.
27. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, July 25, 1873, p. 144.
28. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Aug. 10, 1873, p. 209.
29. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Apr. 13, 1879, p. 211.
30. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Dec. 12, 1880-Jan 10, 1881, pp. 179-180.
31. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Apr. 10, 1886, p. 211 and NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Apr. 10, 1886, p. 71.
32. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Jan. 8, 1888, p. 79.
33. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, May 8, 1880-Dec. 29, 1889, pp. 170-197 and 70-92.
34. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, May 25, 1890, p. 96.
35. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Jan 9, 1892, p. 110.
36. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Nov. 10, 1894, p. 218.
37. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Jan 25, 1897, p. 46.
38. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. III, Mar. 9, 1902, p. 102.
39. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Mar. 15, 1904,

p. 33.

40. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Mar. 25, 1904-July 31, 1904, pp. 36-39.

41. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Mar. 19, 1905, p. 43.

42. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, June 10, 1906, p. 65.

43. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Sept. 6, 1908, p. 86.

44. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Jan. 2, 1910, pp. 92-93 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. III, Jan. 16, 1910, p. 104.

45. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vols. III-IV, Mar. 27, 1910 and Mar. 7, 1915, pp. 105 and 151-152.

46. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Aug. 9, 1914, p. 21.

47. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Apr. 11, 1915, p. 28.

48. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, July 1, 1917, p. 53.

49. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, July 9, 1918-Sept. 1, 1918, pp. 61-64.

50. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Nov. 3, 1918, p. 66.

51. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, May 11, 1919, p. 72.

52. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, June 21, 1921, p. 94.

53. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Apr. 13, 1924 and Apr. 7, 1929, pp. 113 and 137.

54. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Jan. 23, 1926, p. 125.

55. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vols. IV-VII, Aug. 7, 1927-Nov. 28, 1954, pp. 128-196, 53-159, and 1-208.

56. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Apr. 28, 1929 and Apr. 14, 1931, pp. 138, 149-150.

57. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, Sept. 16, 1935, p. 71.

58. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, Mar. 5, 1939, p. 109.
59. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, July 16, 1940, p. 17.
60. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, May 12, 1940, p. 15.
61. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, Apr. 2, 1939 and Apr. 8, 1946, pp. 111, 158-159.
62. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VI, Mar. 10, 1946, p. 156.
63. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vols. VI-VII, Apr. 21, 1946-Apr. 9, 1948, p. 29.
64. The Deacons were Henry Dixon, Bill McLean, Fred Harris, and Charles Stone. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, Mar. 9, 1952-Mar. 23, 1952, p. 108.
65. The younger Trustees elected were Robert Kendrick, Lee Dameron, and William McLean. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, June 21, 1953, p. 296.
66. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Sept. 5, 1954-Nov. 28, 1954, pp. 196-208.
67. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VIII, Apr. 3, 1955 and June 5, 1955, pp. 8 and 19; NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VIII, Nov. 20, 1955, p. 181.
68. The five Elders elected were Marshall Barnes, Raymond Broome, Harris Boyd, John Hancock, and Carter Harris. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VIII, Oct. 23, 1955, p. 180.
69. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VIII, Sept. 8, 1957, p. 191 and NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VIII, June 2, 1957-Aug. 18, 1957, pp. 82-86.
70. The vote against Sunday night services was: 44 in favor and 62 against. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VIII, Sept. 1, 1957, p. 190.
71. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VIII, Apr. 6, 1958-Nov. 11, 1958, pp. 106-121.
72. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IX, Nov. 22, 1959-

Dec. 6, 1959, pp. 25-28.

73. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IX, Apr. 3, 1960-May 1, 1960, pp. 36-39.

74. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X May 5, 1963-Nov. 3, 1963, pp. 9-27.

75. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Jan. 12, 1964-Apr. 26, 1964, pp. 33-45.

76. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IX, Oct. 1, 1961-Oct. 7, 1962, pp. 73-108.

77. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Mar. 17 and Oct. 6, 1963 and July 5, 1964, pp. 5, 21, and 49.

78. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Dec. 20, 1964, p. 373.

79. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Aug. 1, 1965, p. 83.

80. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Apr. 9, 1967 and Apr. 13, 1969, pp. 171, 243.

81. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, June 6, 1966, p. 407.

82. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Feb. 4, 1968, p. 195.

83. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Nov. 14, 1971, p. 39 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Nov. 1, 1970, pp. 432-433.

84. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, June 3, 1973, p. 117.

85. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Aug. 5, 1973-Nov. 11, 1973, pp. 125, 133.

86. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Jan. 8, 1978, p. 317 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. XI Nov. 16, 1975, p. 463.

87. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Mar. 6, 1977, p. 481.

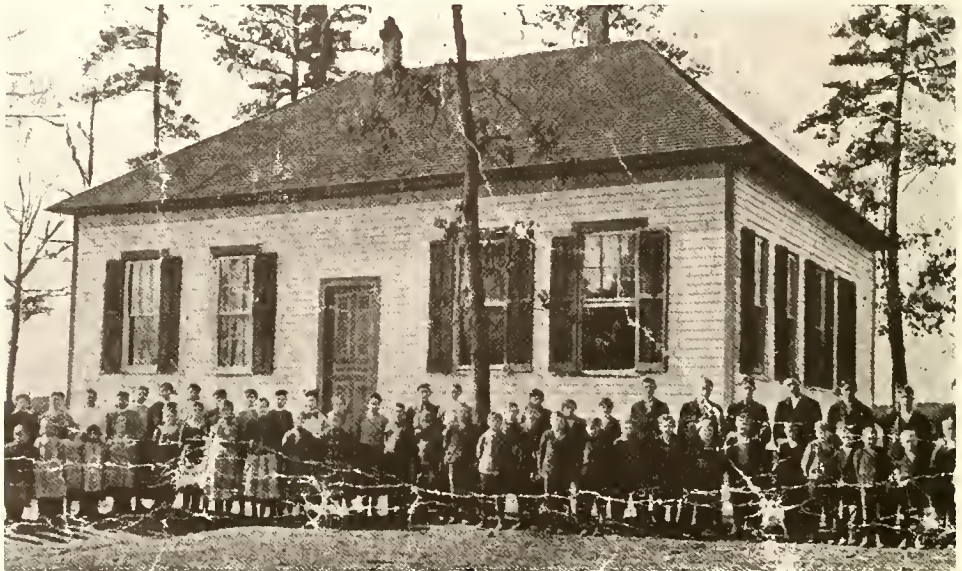
88. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vols. XII-XIII, Feb. 3, 1980-Aug. 15, 1988, pp. 7-257 and 5-147.



Second New Hope Sanctuary, 1858-1964



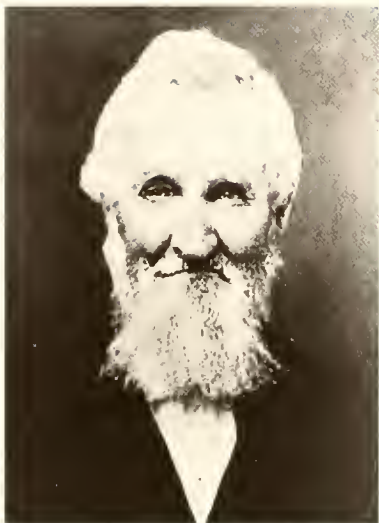
First Manse, Built 1901



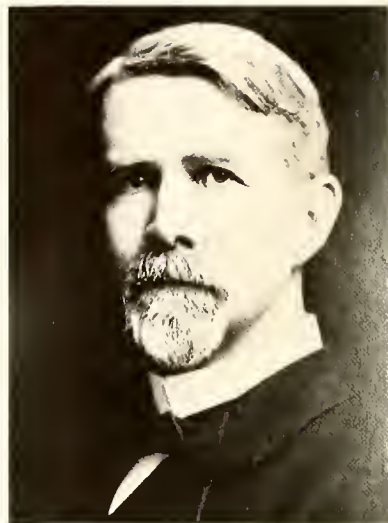
New Hope Public School, Built 1907



Second Sanctuary, Remodeled 1932



James Davidson Hall, 1846-1864



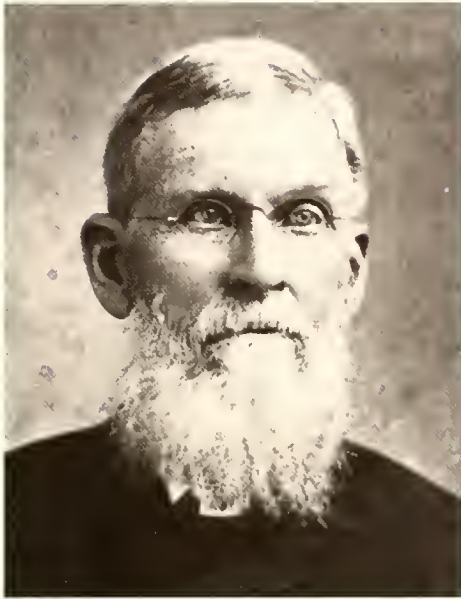
**Richard Spotswood Burwell,
1910-1917**



William Davis Wolfe, 1934-1944



John Henry Knight, 1945-1951



James William Reid
Clerk of Session, 1853-1891



William Dixon Lewis
Clerk of Session, 1927-1954



Church Officers in 1947



The Women's Auxiliary in 1947



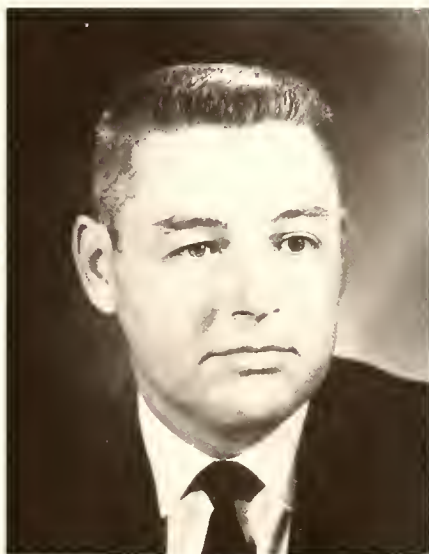
**William Clarence Underwood, son,
Called 1888**



**Raymond Howard Ratchford, son,
Called 1913**



**James Edward Craig, son,
Called 1947**



**George Edward Dameron, son,
Called 1948**



Schoolhouse, built 1921; currently church's education building



Manse today, built 1941



Early Cemetery



Cemetery today



The Church today, built 1965



Old Sanctuary furniture in present Historical Chapel



Inside of present sanctuary



Current Activities Building, built 1972



Burwell Historical Chapel, built 1967



Elders, 1992



Deacons, 1992

CHAPTER FOUR

WHERE THEY MET

Beside a spring, on a slight rise, and beneath spreading oaks, chestnuts, and pines, rose the first edifice of New Hope Presbyterian Church. The church never recorded when the original building was erected. Like many early churches, the site probably began as a meeting ground. A fairly level knoll, easy accessibility, and a constantly bubbling spring made the location ideal for camp meetings and later the church.

In the beginning, the church evidently was little more than a "brush arbor." Brush arbors were exactly what the name implies; a flimsy, shadow-producing lattice-work perched atop cut poles. Covered by branches, leaves, and vines, the brush arbors provided a measure of protection from the sun during the often-protracted preaching services. The brush arbor, however, did not last long.

Early in New Hope's existence, the congregation built a primitive log sanctuary. The building apparently went up even before the church was formally organized by Concord Presbytery. In April, 1814 the Presbytery acknowledged New Hope, yet as early as January, 1813 the first marked burial was made in the church's cemetery.¹ Since cemeteries rarely preceded the construction of churches, the church, evidently, was constructed prior to the cemetery. The church's original historian, J. B. Cochran, in 1906, said, the first building was "...of necessity, a crude log building, plain furnishings with plank windows."² The structure, while rough and unadorned, adequately served the congregation's needs for many years.

The first sanctuary was clearly more than four walls and a roof. As early as 1825 Bethel Presbytery met at the New Hope church. The Presbytery

"...resolved to hold the next Session at New Hope church on Friday the 30th of September next."³ Not only did the Presbytery gather at the church for several days, but the Presbytery held a number of the sessions in the church by candlelight. In 1844 the same building again served as the meeting place for Concord Presbytery.⁴ New Hope's initial structure filled the congregation's requirements for close to half a century. Prior even to the church's land ownership, the church's building stood.

Land acquisition only began for New Hope some forty years after the church was started. The first piece of property was acquired from John Fewell for \$10.00 on November 20, 1830, the initial purchase consisting of three acres and 20 poles.⁵ In 1842 the church bought two sizeable tracts from Isaac McKee and Leroy Stowe, paying each man \$10.00 for two acres apiece.⁶ Not until the following summer was the property duly recorded in the Register's Office in Lincoln County. The two additions enlarged the church's land holdings to over seven acres. New Hope moved from edifice to property rather than the usual property to edifice.

The listing of any furnishings for the first sanctuary were isolated. Clerk J. W. Reid recorded: "Resolved, that the thanks of the Session be tendered to Mrs. Mary McLean for her kindness in presenting to the church of New Hope a set of service ware."⁷ The gift, in 1856, was the church's first communion set. No other items were reported to have been donated or mentioned in outfitting the original building.

In 1858 the church decided to construct a new sanctuary. A Subscription Committee was organized, consisting of: Wm. R. Reid, Chairman; S. W. Craig, Secretary; Robt. J. W. Reid; and John Ratchford. The Committee was directed to raise \$1,000 or as much as possible for the new house of worship. Proposed measurements for the building were to be: no more than 40x50 feet or less than 30x40 feet. Two weeks later

the Subscription Committee reported the results of the money raising efforts to the congregation. The campaign apparently was successful; bids were let. After thanking the Committee, the congregation proceeded to plan a sanctuary 40 feet square.⁸ Work began by naming a Building Committee, members being Robert A. Beaty, William Reid, William B. Ford, S. F. D. Baird, and James W. Reid. Further, the congregation determined that the old church was to be sold and the proceeds were to be used for the new church. A little more than a month after affirming the plans, the congregation approved John Armstrong and Abram B. Titman to do the construction work. Armstrong and Titman bid \$1,000 for the project, of which they would subscribe \$50.00. Architecturally, the building contained ten windows, four doors, and a gallery in the rear for slaves.⁹ As with most structures of that era, the building at first remained unpainted. Not until late in the following year did the congregation approve painting the new church.¹⁰ Following the construction of the sanctuary, New Hope's building efforts ground to a halt for nearly a generation.

The Civil War and the chaotic years that followed largely restricted any improvements to the sanctuary. Late in Reconstruction, New Hope did manage some maintenance. Sixteen years after the second sanctuary was built, the congregation finally got around to reroofing the building.¹¹ Nothing further was done to the structure during the war years and the post-war occupation period.

As the church experienced limited finances in upgrading the building, so the church was equally strapped in acquiring more land. The only additional real estate that the church obtained during the rest of the Nineteenth Century was a quarter acre in 1873. John and Martha E. Harrison sold the church the small tract for \$2.00.¹² Fortunately, the church did not need to buy more land for expansion and did not have to

sell any land to settle outstanding debts. New Hope, like many landowners in the South, remained land rich and cash poor.

The church's first major renovation project for the second sanctuary did not occur for nearly thirty years. In October, 1886 the Session set out the ambitious program of removing the old slave gallery in the back of the church and having the entire church painted. A Committee was established, composed of: S. J. Hand, E. P. Lewis, J. J. Lewis, and F. W. Leeper. Nearly a year later the work remained unfinished. The Session reappointed S. J. Hand and E. P. Lewis to get the renovation completed.¹³ Hand and Lewis finally got the job done. After refurbishing the church, the congregation began investigating other building programs.

Growth in the surrounding communities led New Hope to support new church construction efforts. Members of the church helped initiate the establishment of churches in Lowell and Belmont, N.C. Other members contributed to the building of a chapel "...in the southern part of the congregation."¹⁴ The building, known for years as McLean's Chapel, served as a sanctuary and schoolhouse for that part of the congregation and county. New Hope's lone structural improvement prior to the Twentieth Century was the erection of a Session house. The Building Committee was the church's largest to that time, consisting of: G. L. McKee, John M. Gaston, E. P. Lewis, Thomas Allison, R. A. Harrison, and Robert Ratchford. Beyond determining the need for a separate Session building, the Elders provided no other details concerning the structure.¹⁵ As the new century dawned, the church's facilities consisted solely of a sanctuary, Session house, and cemetery.

The arrival of New Hope's first full-time minister swiftly increased building and maintenance activity. The church erected the first manse in 1901 at a cost of

\$800. Situated close to New Hope Road, directly across from the sanctuary, the white-framed house originally had six rooms. The house was accompanied by a number of outbuildings, including a barn located near the site of the present manse. Extensive repairs were proposed for the sanctuary in 1905. E. P. Lewis and T. L. Allison "...were appointed a committee to examine and suggest what improvements were needed."¹⁶ After going over the church, Lewis and Allison recommended recovering and other general upgrading. Following the inspection, Allison volunteered to canvas the congregation to secure financing for the project. The Session readily accepted Allison's offer. A Building Committee was organized, including: T. L. Allison, J. M. Gaston, and G. B. Stowe. The committee contracted member W. A. Jackson for the additions and repairs at a cost of \$740. Overruns pushed the bill to \$946.¹⁷ By 1910 the church's physical plant embraced a chapel, the manse, the Session house, and the sanctuary. For a time, New Hope's facilities even included another structure.

The church purchased the first public school building in the New Hope community. Minister J. B. Cochran, who presided over the acquisition, wrote: "During 1905, the church came into possession....of the old school house, which in its present position and condition, cost about \$85."¹⁸ The church raised the money through cash donations and donated labor. Professor Hall was paid \$60.00 for the building, old paint was removed for \$11.25, and a new coat of paint was added for \$15.40. bringing the total cost to \$86.65. For two years, the church used the school as a school to supplement the minister's income. In October, 1907, the church sold the schoolhouse to E. P. Lewis for \$60.00. Cochran received \$54.15 and the balance went to pay church bills. The church's first venture into the schoolhouse business was not to be the church's last.

Additions to the church's furnishings occurred in fits and starts. The old pulpit Bible was sold to Thomas T. Craig for \$1.00, clearing the way for a similar gift later. W. D. Martin, once a member of New Hope, presented a bell to the church, which still hangs in the steeple today. The bell was given in memory of his mother, Mary Craig, long a faithful member of the church. At the same time, Martin gave the church a pulpit desk for the sanctuary.¹⁹ These gifts and others that remain unnoted, went a long way in prompting the Session to keep the buildings maintained.

Work on the nearly fifty year-old sanctuary proved to be a growing problem. Less than five years after extensive sanctuary improvements were made, the church needed further unspecified work. At a cost of \$617, New Hope again refurbished the church. Only part of the money was subscribed initially. A later campaign was necessary to collect an additional \$100 to \$200.²⁰ The project ended New Hope's attention to building maintenance for the better part of twenty years.

During Cochran's pastorate, the church got involved in some real estate transactions to complement the renovation work. New Hope received about a quarter acre from members W. A. Jackson and his wife in 1904. The next year, the Session instructed the Trustees to arrange an exchange of lots with the Gaston County School Board for half an acre, the location of the trade never being recorded.²¹ These two small acquisitions were the church's only property additions for close to thirty years.

World War I and the Roaring Twenties proved to be lean years for upkeep on the church. A telephone was installed in the manse by Elder W. T. Ford.²² In late 1918, despite financial hardships created by declining membership and the influenza epidemic, the Session agreed to take the necessary steps to repair the manse. The Elders resolved to raise whatever funds were required.²³ At the start of the twenties, the officers

decided to have the organ cleaned and to repair the valley around the sanctuary's bell tower "...if the work could be done readily."²⁴ The Session never indicated whether the work was accomplished. In 1921 the church purchased an individual communion set.²⁵ The original "service ware" was given to J. D. B. McLean, long-time Gaston County sheriff and son of donor, Mrs. Mary McLean.²⁶ Nothing else of note was added to the church's furnishings or done to the church's facilities from 1910 to 1930.

A substantial gift of \$1,000 to the church's building fund in 1930 finally shook New Hope out of its decades-long lethargy. For months, however, the church ignored the issue. Only late in December, 1931 did the Session debate the question of whether to repair the church and to build some Sunday School rooms. By the time the discussion came about, the fund had grown to \$1,100. Looking ahead for the church, the Elders voted to proceed with the project. A Building Committee was formed, composed of: Mrs. Harris (Zoe) Boyd, Lyndon Wilson, Tom Glover, Mrs. D. P. Hoffman, W. D. Lewis, and the Rev. L. K. Martin, Chairman. For the first time, women were included on a major church construction project. The undertaking took eleven months to complete.²⁷

Modernization arrived for New Hope upon completion of the work. The Committee had remodeling done, new Sunday School rooms placed at the rear of the sanctuary, a furnace and flue added, a basement dug, carpeting put down, and electricity installed. The work done on the front of the sanctuary involved closing off the side doors and locating a single double door in the front center of the church. Stone steps were placed at the new front door of the church. The old large center window was converted to side windows, replacing the old doors. Two rooms were added at the front, one on either side of the vestibule. The archway over the entry-way between the vestibule and

the sanctuary was lowered for swinging doors with glass. The old plank walls and the beamed ceiling were covered with sheet rock. Insulation was added between the walls and over the ceiling. The church converted from gas to electric lights. Locks were put on all windows in the church. At the rear of the sanctuary, two rooms were built on a foundation of brick pillars. A door was created between the sanctuary and the new hall connecting the sanctuary with the new rooms. The new addition was covered with cedar shingles and side weatherboarding to match the rest of the church. The final cost for the entire project came to \$1,809.59. When finished, the work constituted the largest single renovation effort since the sanctuary had been built.²⁸

To accomplish the improvements, New Hope had to rely on the contributions of many inside and outside of the church. The Building Committee expressed gratitude to the "...ladies, men, young people, former members, and friends of the church..."²⁹ for making the job possible. Special thanks were extended to Mrs. D. P. Hoffman in raising funds; Wilson, Wright, Glover, Ragan, the Stowes, and the Damerons, and others for digging the basement; George Wright for varnishing the pews; and Vance Hoffman for donating stain for the floor.³⁰ With many of the congregation actively involved in the remodeling, the congregation soon began noticing other parts of the church needing attention.

The new face-lift for the church heightened the members' sensitivity to appearances. The Women's Auxiliary purchased a new pulpit Bible in 1935. Two years later, the women presented a communion table to the church in memory of the Rev. Archie McLaughlin, who had resigned from the church in 1929 on account of poor health. But he remained in the community with his family until his death in 1935. His wife and daughters still belonged to New Hope at the time of the memorial gift.³¹ A short while later, the church, having developed expanded educational space, bought four dozen

chairs. The minor additions to the furnishings reflected the renewed optimism at New Hope.

During the cash-poor thirties, the church still managed to acquire additional property as well as structures. In 1937 the Session "...voted to give up claim to the 'club house' and to pay \$10.00 for an acre of land deeded to the School Board."³² The location of the land and building were never identified. However, owing to the fact that the School Board had closed the New Hope school in 1936, the transaction probably involved an area and edifice immediately adjacent to the school and church. The next year the Session instructed the Trustees to secure the deed from Gaston County for the school building, the schoolhouse already having been designated for the church by the County Commissioners. In return, the Elders had the Trustees convey a deed to the commissioners for the land the church had sold to the county. The purchase of the old brick schoolhouse in 1938 wound up being an unexpected blessing for New Hope.³³

Once obtaining ownership of the school building, the church wondered what to do with the unused structure. Initially, the Elders had the facility repaired, the building having stood vacant for two years. Later the Session created a committee to study future uses for the schoolhouse. The Committee consisted of: W. D. Wolfe, minister, Lee Lewis, Sr., and Schenck Craig. However, the church first had to settle the lingering legal matters from the deal. The Session instructed the "...Trustees to pay County Board of Education \$1,000 for parcel of land, deed by said Board to the church and to have the deed properly recorded."³⁴ Unexpected events soon overtook the Committee's deliberations.

By the end of 1940 the Session began discussions about erecting a new manse. All Elders agreed the church should have a better one. A congregational meeting was even called for sometime later "...to find

out the will of the majority..."³⁵ regarding a new manse. No record was kept whether the meeting actually occurred, but a Building Fund was started for a new manse in September, 1941. Elder Fred Dixon was made Treasurer of the Manse Building Fund. The church was primed to erect a new minister's home to replace the forty year old structure.³⁶

A fire swiftly turned the planning into necessity. On October 28, 1941 the original manse burned to the ground, leaving fifty-nine year old minister W. D. Wolfe, his wife, and children homeless. Wolfe and his family immediately moved into the empty schoolhouse. The Wolfes lived in the brick school building until a new manse could be built.

A new seven room brick manse was erected in 1942. The church set the second manse back from the road, situating the home on the knoll above the road across from the church. The cost for the new house ran to \$6,000, with all but \$900 being paid by 1943 through the contributions of members, former members, and friends of the church. At the same time the manse was built, the church added a small wooden garage behind the house. The congregation responded so generously that Dixon, Treasurer for the Manse Building Fund, was able to resign two years after assuming the job.³⁷ While not quite as envisioned, New Hope still managed to construct a new manse.

After completing the minister's home, the church began considering an educational building. Even prior to calling a minister to replace W. D. Wolfe, the Session recognized the need to increase the church's classroom space.

The Elders investigated the feasibility of using the old schoolhouse to satisfy the church's growing educational requirements. Considerable interest was initially expressed in converting the school building, since the facility had already been used as an annex for the church before Wolfe's untimely death. A

Committee of Building Plans was organized, consisting of: P. T. Elrod, W. D. Lewis, and U. L. Lewis, Sr. The Session charged the committee with drawing up plans for a building and raising money for the project.³⁸ Despite early enthusiasm for a classroom building, the church's efforts to secure an educational facility soon subsided.

New Hope addressed the more mundane matters of maintenance and upkeep. With a new minister arriving, the Session spent considerable time and money on improving appearances. The church paid the county to terrace the yard around the manse. The Session moved to get the cemetery plotted. By the time Wolfe's replacement moved onto the field, the officers had given the buildings and grounds a complete face-lift.

J. H. Knight wasted little time in coming to grips with the problem of the church's educational building. Beginning in November 1945, Knight had the Session establish a Christmas gift fund for the new building. In January, 1946, he organized a "penny collection" to be held through Easter for the educational facility. During the fall of the same year, Knight received permission from the Session to raise \$2,500 for the building fund by Christmas. The following year, 1947, he slowed down; no new fund drives were initiated. By 1948 Knight again was pushing the fund drive for the educational facility. He got Easter designated for a special building fund collection. After little more than three years, Knight had the church ready to proceed with an educational structure.³⁹

New Hope turned from fund-raising to construction in 1949. The church formed a committee of five for the building planning: U. L. Lewis, Sr., Fred Ratchford, W. D. Lewis, Harris Boyd, and Schenck Craig.⁴⁰ Only, immediately following the Committee's election, a real estate matter arose that temporarily delayed New Hope's building efforts.

For the educational building, additional property

became available to the church. During the same month, the church turned from monetary considerations to structural considerations. The Session decided to purchase twenty-two lots behind the manse for \$1,870. Funds for buying the land were obtained by borrowing from the building fund. However, the Session insisted the money be paid back. A special collection was taken the last Sunday in October, 1949.⁴¹ After securing the lots, the church returned to the pressing matter of the educational building.

In early October, 1949 the Building Planning Committee reported to the congregation. Chairman Fred Ratchford presented a list of three recommendations: 1)move the old school to the church grounds for the educational building, 2)remodel the church steeple, and 3)build a proper chancel for the church with a memorial stained glass window in the rear of the church. Ratchford advised the work proceed in the order listed. The cost, according to the committee, ran between \$17,000 and \$19,000. Congregational approval was given, electing The Planning Committee as the Building Committee and adding members T. P. Elrod and Charles R. Long. Finally, the church was ready to proceed with an educational facility.⁴²

Three weeks after approving the project, a snag developed. The Building Committee reported the church would save money by putting the schoolhouse parallel to the church instead of parallel to the road. The Session opposed the change. Still, sometime in late 1949 or early 1950 when the old school actually was moved, the building wound up parallel to the church.⁴³ The Committee forged ahead despite the opposition.

Once the schoolhouse was in place, work progressed rapidly. Members built the basement, which became the church's fellowship hall. The stage was air-hammered out of solid rock by the men of the church. Other members served as the Furnishings Committee: Sam Craig, Mrs. Fred Dixon, and Mrs. T. P. Elrod. Near

the end of the project, the church borrowed \$4,000 to finish and furnish the Education Building.⁴⁴ After years of dreaming and planning, New Hope had the classroom facility that had been so long sought.

Knight's pastorate was not solely consumed by construction. On Easter Day, 1948, New Hope was surprised with a new organ, presented to the church by the ten Dixon children "...for the Glory of God, and in memory of Mr. and Mrs. John Neely Dickson, devoted and faithful members of this church for many years."⁴⁵ Later the same year, Elder Fred Ratchford gave the church a baptismal font in memory of his mother and father, Maryetta and J. F. Ratchford.⁴⁶ The two fine additions to the sanctuary helped complement the church's other improvement efforts.

The 1950's wound up being a time for New Hope to address other issues besides buildings. In 1953 the church incorporated. Two years later the church borrowed \$1,500 to improve the church grounds. Elected as a Landscaping Committee for the project were: Ted Baucom, Harris Boyd, Charles Stone, and Bill McLean. Near the end of the decade, the church again borrowed money, \$3,600 to purchase property on New Hope's northwest side from Pat Smith and on the northeast side from David Harrison. The slight increases in the church's real estate were matched by minor improvements in the church's appointments. A pulpit light was donated by the family of Mr. Erwin McLean in memory of his wife, Bertha Boyd McLean. The Blanche Burwell Sunday School class gave the church four offering plates. Perhaps the most significant gift was a new communion set. Mrs. Gilmore McLauchlin Kincaid, daughter of former minister, Archie McLauchlin, gave the service in memory of her mother, Mrs. A. L. McLauchlin.⁴⁷ The decade was an era of little structural change for the church.

The major transition came in the sixties. At the last Session meeting of the fifties, the Elders asked

the Deacons to prepare a building program. Stunningly, the Board of Deacons recommended the church build a new sanctuary instead of remodeling the old sanctuary. Six months after the idea was proposed, the congregation voted 50 to 2 to proceed with the idea. A new Building Committee was created: Harris Boyd, Fred Dixon, John D. Elkins, Lee Lewis, Jr., Sam Craig, Charles Brandon, Ralph Gettys, Miss Ida Hoffman, Robert Kendrick, Schneck Craig, John B. Stowe, Jr., and Mrs. William T. McLean.⁴⁸ The committee set to work immediately, but the efforts were slowed by the resignation of pastor, J. H. Buzhardt.

Planning the new sanctuary did not resume in earnest until late 1961. A temporary change of residence forced the resignation of Building Committee member J. D. Elkins, but the committee added Henry Dixon and Charles Stone. By early 1962 the committee arranged for an architect, Gant Lewis. During the summer of that year, the congregation received the preliminary drawings, presented by co-chairmen Charles Stone and Schneck Craig. The first draft recommended a colonial-style sanctuary located on the old site and to brick veneer the Educational Building. Cost estimates ran \$81,306, with furnishings pushing the total over \$100,000. The members approved the report unanimously.⁴⁹ Months later, Elkins returned to the area and the Session reinstated him on the Building Committee. New Hope seemed ready to proceed with the church's third sanctuary.

Fund raising began following the congregation's ratification of the plans. The church hired Leroy Arnold from the office of the Synod of N.C. to direct the financial campaign for the building program. For nearly a year, the church struggled to raise the necessary monies for the new facility.⁵⁰

New Hope received the final plans for the proposed sanctuary in November, 1963. A month later the congregation postponed giving approval to architect J.

L. Beam's design. Complicating matters further, Chairman Charles Stone resigned early in 1964. The Session stepped in and named Ted Baucom Co-chairman. Again, architect Beam and engineer Jack Bell presented plans for the new building. The congregation approved the second proposal for the sanctuary. Bids were set. Only problems multiplied when the bids were opened and rejected. For five months the church's dreams hung in limbo. Finally, Building Committee member J. D. Elkins ended the uncertainty. Elkins recommended the church build only the sanctuary.⁵¹ Relieved that the impasse was over, the congregation concurred.

Final estimates totaled \$119,368. Beam Construction received \$87,500 for erecting the building. Heating and air conditioning cost \$24,500, plumbing took another \$1,963, and electrical work went for \$5,405. The cost of the sanctuary sorely stretched the church's financial resources.⁵²

Early in the construction phase the church had to borrow money. First, New Hope took a loan of \$50,000 from Gastonia Mutual Savings & Loan Association. A month later the Church Extension Committee of the Synod of N.C. loaned the congregation \$40,000. With the financial arrangements secured, the church finished the sanctuary.⁵³

Ground breaking was held January 3, 1965. The new sanctuary was put up on the identical site of the old sanctuary. When the former sanctuary was razed, evidence was found of the church's original building. Members came by daily to watch the work. A large crowd assembled on the day the steeple was lifted into place. During the actual construction, the congregation worshipped in the fellowship hall of the Education Building. New Hope's third house of worship went up without any structural delays.⁵⁴

As the new church neared completion, a number of related matters were resolved. A Memorial Book was begun, with a policy set regarding gifts. Mrs. Harris

Boyd gave the church 200 copies of The Hymnbook. The Session decided to roof, gutter, and paint the Educational Building with funds left over from the sanctuary's construction. At the same time, the Elders agreed to stone and gravel the church's parking lot. At an auction the Trustees, with Session approval, disposed of the old sanctuary's pews.⁵⁵ Having eliminated the peripheral matters, the congregation turned to the dedication of the new facility.

Consecration of New Hope's third sanctuary occurred on September 5, 1965. The Consecration Committee was composed of Fred Dixon, Chairman; Robert Kendrick; and Harris Boyd. Invited guests included former ministers Louis K. Martin, John H. Knight, and John H. Buzhardt. Buzhardt preached the dedication sermon. Following the morning worship, a dinner was held on the grounds and after the meal the cornerstone service was conducted. Special bulletins were printed for the occasion. The formal dedication of the sanctuary brought to a close the long and arduous chapter in the church's efforts to construct a new facility.⁵⁶

Following the sanctuary's erection, the church paused only briefly in the building expansion efforts. In the space of five years, New Hope tackled the remodeling of the manse, the construction of an historical chapel, and the development of an activities building. After over thirty years of no new buildings, the church surged forward to make up for lost time.

Less than a year after the sanctuary's completion, New Hope addressed the condition of the manse. Typically, the Session formed a Remodeling Committee: John Hancock, John D. Elkins, Schenck Craig, Joe McLean, and Joel Kendrick. The committee recommended a major addition: another bedroom, a second bathroom, and a utility room. The magnitude of the work to be done compelled the Session to create a Drapes and Furnishing Committee: Mrs. Jack Lineberger, Mrs. Fred

Stowe, and Mrs. William T. McLean. Together the two committees efficiently expanded the manse's living space and redid the inside of the house. The church paid for the work by selling Carolina Power & Light Company stock owned by the church.⁵⁷ After completing the renovation, New Hope moved immediately into another project.

In April, 1967 the Session received a request to establish a place to preserve the church's history. At first, the idea was to create an historical room in the church, the cost being underwritten by the church. Later sisters Ida and Zoe Hoffman suggested a separate historical chapel. The Session approved the Hoffman's plan, with reservations.

Spurred on by the Hoffman sisters, New Hope built the Burwell Historical Chapel. However, the Session kept tight control over the project. In a letter to the sisters, the Elders said: all money for the building was to be raised quietly, with no solicitations; the entire cost of the building was to be deposited with the church treasurer before the actual construction could begin; the structure had to meet all Gaston County building codes; the chapel, upon completion, would become the property of New Hope church, all furniture placed in the chapel would become the church's, with no claims to be lodged by heirs; the church retained the right to move the building at any later date, if necessary; and, the minister, as advisor, be kept informed of the work's progress. No objections were raised. The building was completed as specified under the guidelines dictated by the Session. Dedication occurred on May 19, 1968 as part of the church's 175th Anniversary.⁵⁸

The completion of the chapel, unfortunately, did not end the Hoffman's historical scheme. Shortly after the building was finished, the lone remaining sister, Zoe Hoffman, approached the Session with an extensive landscaping design. The Elders rejected the proposal.

Landscaping, the Session said, was to be confined to the area immediately around the chapel and a 12 x 6 foot plot around the spring. Further, the Session instructed the Deacons to develop an overall landscaping plan for the church. Finally, the Session closed the matter by telling Zoe Hoffman that the church would handle the landscaping and any monies already collected for the work would be sent to a charity of her choice. The Session's decision concerning the chapel concluded the struggle with the Hoffmans over the historical facility.⁵⁹

Following the chapel's erection was a right-of-way sale by the church to the N.C. Department of Transportation. New Hope Road's widening in 1970 cost the church nine-tenths of an acre and several trees. The state paid the church \$5,050 for the land. After selling the property, the congregation used the money to pave the parking lot.⁶⁰ The road work deal proved to be merely a brief respite in the church's building program.

Early in 1971 the Long Range Planning Committee proposed an Activities Building for the church. The plan recommended a 20 x 40 foot structure located on the property behind the manse, costing \$12,109. Financing for the building was to be generated from Building Fund pledges and the negotiation of a loan, using the site's property as collateral.⁶¹ The congregation approved, but difficulties soon arose.

New Hope got caught in the middle of a jurisdictional dispute. Construction was slowed by problems between Kings Mountain Presbytery and the Synod of N.C. The Church Extension Committee of the Synod of N.C. approved a \$7,700 loan. Kings Mountain Presbytery's Church Extension Committee contended the Synod Committee's confirmation of the loan was the Presbytery's prerogative. Objection by the Presbytery Committee did not block the loan, but the dispute delayed the church's project for a year.⁶²

After the bureaucratic dispute was resolved, the Activities Building went up quickly. The facility was completed in early spring, 1972. However, by the time New Hope got around to constructing the structure, the cost had risen to \$13,373. Formal dedication services were held on September 24, 1972. The finished project finally brought to an end nearly a full decade of construction by the church.⁶³

During the sixties no significant property issues merited the Church's attention. The church did return the old "offering box" to the family of Mr. George H. Wright. Mr. Wright was one of the box's original builders. The steady stream of physical structures that were erected consumed the bulk of the church's energies.⁶⁴

The 1970's refocused the church's efforts on maintenance, furnishings, and property. New Hope bought additional communion equipment to meet the needs of the expanding congregation. David Harrison donated property to correct the boundaries on the church's cemetery, repairs were made on the cemetery, and the first rules and regulations were set for the use of the cemetery. A sale of church property on the northwest side of New Hope Road to Roy T. Meeler and Schenck Craig was considered. After deliberating over the sale, the Session postponed the matter indefinitely. A new furnace was added to the manse along with other needed repairs. In 1976 the church expanded the cemetery. The following year New Hope created the Perpetual Cemetery Trust with Independence National Bank. Late in 1977 the church borrowed \$10,000 to repair and paint the educational building and the sanctuary. The congregation closed out the year with the receipt of a gift of handbells from Mr. and Mrs. Fred Dixon in memory of their son, Alfred Dixon. New Hope ended the decade by beginning to consider what to do about the educational building.⁶⁵

By the start of the 1980's the church realized

modernization was necessary for the classroom facilities. An Educational Building Study Committee was formed in 1980, consisting of: Don Osborne, Chairman, Frank Maske, Lawson Warren, Wayne Lundquist, Barbara Pressley, and Betty Stowe. After investigating the matter thoroughly, the Committee recommended the facility be accessible for the elderly, there be teaching and meeting rooms, and fellowship space be available for 200. The Committee concluded the study by advising that an architect be hired to draw up plans for remodeling the building, funding be secured from the W. D. Lewis fund, and bids be let. A congregational meeting was called to consider the matter. After lengthy discussion on the issue, the church postponed the move until additional information was available. Shortly thereafter, a pastoral crisis delayed the program indefinitely.⁶⁶

The calling of J. M. Cockerham as minister moved the renovation of the educational building back into the forefront of the church's priorities. Less than six months after calling Cockerham, the Session heard a remodeling presentation from architect Guy Yeargin. A Steering Committee was established, composed of: Richard Dameron, John D. Elkins, and Eric Pressley. One month later the Committee advised hiring Yeargin. The Session concurred and made the Steering Committee the Building Finance Committee. After nearly a year of preparation, Yeargin presented the renovation plan to the church's officers. In the fall of 1983, the congregation accepted the establishment of a Building Renovation Committee, the preliminary plans, the willingness to proceed with working drawings, and the means of financing the project. Named to the Renovation Committee were: J. D. Elkins, U. L. Lewis, Jr., R. Jackson, T. Graham, R. Smith, Mrs. F. Maske, and R. E. Martin. The only hold-up was raising the money. A solution to the funding was finally resolved in April 1984. The congregation agreed to a proposal

from George Story of Church Bonds, Inc. to sell bonds to pay for the renovation. Once the backing was in place, the church hired Beam Construction Company to redo the facility. Refurbishing was done to the fellowship hall, the kitchen, the classrooms, the nursery, and the offices. The work was finished early in 1985. To celebrate completing the remodeling of the educational building, the Session designated a Dedication Event Committee. Serving on the Committee were: Mr. and Mrs. Frank Smith, co-chairpersons, Mrs. Fred Stowe, Mrs. Thomas Graham, Mrs. Julie Fisher, Mr. William Glenn, and Mrs. John D. Elkins. Official dedication of the facility was observed on September 8, 1985. After over five years of dreaming, planning, and work, the church had an educational structure to serve well into the next century.⁶⁷

The overwhelming majority of the church's time and effort went to the classroom building's remodeling, but other matters relating to the facilities drew the church's attention, too. New Hope received a harpsichord from Dr. S. H. Adams, an Organ Fund was established, and the Session had a sound system installed in the sanctuary. Despite the heavy financial burden imposed by the renovation work, the church managed to keep addressing the future.⁶⁸

Facility expansion necessitated increased property maintenance. The Session doubled the cost of cemetery plots for members and non-members, with one-fourth of the price going to the Perpetual Cemetery Trust. David Harrison donated a plot of land to the church in 1986 to clarify cemetery boundaries. New Hope voted to retain direct possession of the church's property under the property exclusion clause of the Articles of Agreement for the Plan of Reunion. By the end of Cockerham's pastorate, the church's property officially belonged solely to the church.⁶⁹

A change in ministers highlighted the problems created by the church's bond program. As early as 1987

the Session began discussing refinancing the church bonds. In the spring of 1988 the Board of Deacons further advised the Session that the lack of funds was hurting church projects. Unfortunately, high interest rates hindered the church from doing anything about the bonds.⁷⁰

New pastor B. D. Weger helped the church address a number of pressing maintenance issues. Before Weger arrived, members of the Pastor Nominating Committee had the manse refurbished. After Weger's arrival, the Session negotiated a loan from the Presbytery of Western North Carolina to put new shingles on the sanctuary roof and vinyl siding on the woodwork of the manse and sanctuary. A new copier and typewriter were purchased for the office. Following a break-in, the church built a new utility building. A lightning strike in the summer of 1992 forced the church to buy a new air conditioning system for the sanctuary. The replacements strained the church financially, but the items were urgently needed.

Finally, in early 1992 the church dealt with the bond program. Lowered interest rates allowed New Hope to secure a commercial loan. The reduction of the church's monthly payments relieved the millstone around the congregation's neck, but the drop in payments did not totally eliminate the church's financial struggles. In an era of tight money, the church remained in economic difficulty.⁷¹

The acquiring of land, building of sanctuaries, and maintenance of facilities never went smoothly for New Hope. From the earliest structure to the latest renovation, the church wrestled with meeting the needs of the congregation and paying for the projects. Money as well as members frequently interfered with the church's plans. Vision often fell victim to reality.

Despite the obstacles, the church grew. What began as a gathering place around a refreshing spring became a stable church anchored by a landmark sanctuary, an

historical educational building, a storied cemetery, a fine manse, and other facilities. The church never lacked a visible presence in the community.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER FOUR

1. The first recorded burial in the New Hope cemetery was William Henry Ford, died: 9 January 1813, Aged: 5 months, 9 days, the son of John and Margaret L. Ford., New Hope Presbyterian Church Cemetery Index (Gastonia: March 1, 1976), p. 28.

2. John B. Cochran, Historical Sketch of New Hope Presbyterian Church (Gastonia: Loftin & Co., Printers, 1906), p. 12.

3. Presbytery of Bethel (hereafter referred to as BP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Apr. 1, 1825, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 11.

4. Presbytery of Concord (hereafter referred to as CP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. IV, October 10-12, 1844, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 299.

5. Cochran, p. 11.

6. The two deeds were registered in the Register's Office of Lincoln County, North Carolina, July 22, 1843 in Book Number 40, pages 82 and 87 by Register of Deeds William J. Wilson. The property the church acquired was two acres from Isaac McKee and two acres from Leroy Stowe.

7. Pieces of the first communion serviceware are on display in the Burwell Historical Chapel, having been donated to the church by the McLean family. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Congregational Meetings, Vol. I, May 3, 1856, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., page unnumbered.

8. Contrary to the account in J. B. Cochran's Historical Sketch of New Hope Presbyterian Church, the congregational meeting minutes clearly indicate that the sanctuary built in 1858 was to be 40 feet square. No other mention is made in the congregational meeting

minutes of the size or description of the sanctuary constructed. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. 11, Jan. 2-Jan. 16, 1858, pp. 200-202.

9. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Feb. 20, 1858, p. 202.

10. The congregation approved the outlay of \$37.30 for the painting of the sanctuary for the first time. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Oct., 1859, p. 203.

11. When the congregation approved the re-roofing of the sanctuary, the church could only afford tarpaper. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Dec. 18, 1874, p. 210.

12. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Oct. 29, 1886 and Sept. 10, 1887, pp. 215-216.

13. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Session Minutes, Vol. II, May 25, 1890, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 96.

14. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, June 29, 1890, p. 97.

15. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Nov. 10, 1894, p. 218.

16. Cochran, pp. 12-13.

17. Cochran, p. 13.

18. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Entry Undated, p. 96.

19. Cochran, p. 13 and NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Mar. 28, 1909, p. 89.

20. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Sept. 4, 1910, pp. 98-99.

21. Cochran, p. 11 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. III, Mar. 25, 1904, p. 103.

22. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, July 14, 1918, p. 62.

23. The Session did not indicate what was required to be done on the manse. NHPC, Session minutes, Vol. IV, Nov. 3, 1918, p. 66.

24. This was the first mention in the Session

minutes of an organ. However, the mention of an organist occurred as early as 1899. New Hope certainly had an organ sometime prior to the turn of the century. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Feb. 20, 1920, p. 77.

25. John B. Cochran, compiler Ida Hoffman, Historical Sketch of the New Hope Presbyterian Church (Gastonia: Loftin & Co., Printers, 1943), p.6.

26. The Session retained the original "serviceware" until "it was decided to give part of the old Communion set to Sheriff McLean to keep." The set was returned to Sheriff J. D. B. McLean at his request in 1925. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, May 17, 1925, p. 120.

27. NHPC, Session Minutes Vol. IV, Dec. 13, 1931, p. 157.

28. Not until volume V of the Session Minutes did the Clerks begin to record all of the work done during the renovations and additions to the church. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, Nov. 27, 1932, pp. 55-57.

29. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, Nov. 27, 1932, p. 56.

30. Ibid.

31. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, Oct. 24, 1937, p. 93.

32. This transaction is preliminary to the church's efforts to obtain the schoolhouse built in 1921. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, Mar. 24, 1937, p. 84.

33. The church's acquisition of the schoolhouse occurred as two separate transactions. First, the church seemed to have traded a parcel of land for the school building. Second, the church seemed to have had to purchase the land on which the schoolhouse stood. The different dates of the transactions indicated that the land and the structure were not acquired simultaneously. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, July 10, 1938, p. 100.

34. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, Mar. 31 1940, p. 11.

35. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, Dec. 15, 1940,

- p. 23.
36. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, Sept. 21, 1941,
- p. 43.
37. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, Oct. 10, 1943.
- p. 93.
38. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VI, Feb. 18-27, 1945, pp. 120-121.
39. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vols. VI & VII Nov. 11, 1945, Jan. 13, 1946, Apr. 8 and Apr. 21, 1946, and Feb. 8, 1948, pp. 143-159 and 27.
40. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, May 22, 1949, p. 278.
41. The collection taken on October 30, 1949 totaled \$767.00. The minutes did not record whether or not the additional funds necessary for the purchase of the land were made up at a later time. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, May 29, 1949-Oct. 30, 1949, pp. 53-59.
42. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, Oct. 9, 1949, pp. 279-281.
43. The minutes of the specific incident are very vague concerning the exact details of moving the old schoolhouse. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Oct. 30, 1949, pp. 59-60.
44. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, Sept. 10, 1950, p. 280.
45. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Apr. 4, 1948, p. 29.
46. The baptismal font given by Elder Fred Ratchford in memory of his mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Ratchford, continues the long line of service by the Ratchford family. J. F. Ratchford served as an Elder in New Hope. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Nov. 7, 1948, p. 41.
47. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vols. VII & VIII, Dec. 2, 1951-Jan. 5, 1958, pp. 95-209 and 2-98.
48. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. IX, June 26, 1960, p. 182.

49. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IX, Apr. 1-July 1, 1962, pp. 93-100 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. IX, July 22, 1962, p. 200.

50. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Jan. 27, 1963, p. 3. NHPC Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Feb. 3, 1963, p. 357.

51. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Dec. 9, 1963-Oct. 11, 1964, pp. 361-369.

52. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Nov. 22, 1964, p. 373..

53. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Feb. 7, 1965, and Mar. 7, 1965, pp. 377-383.

54. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Dec. 13, 1964-Feb. 28, 1965, pp. 63-69.

55. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, July 4-July 18, 1965, pp. 79-81 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Aug. 1-15, 1965, p. 387.

56. The first service was held in the church's third sanctuary on August 15, 1965. Construction took only a little over six months. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, July 4, and Aug. 1, 1965, pp. 79 and 83.

57. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, July 10-Aug. 7, 1966, pp. 131-133 and NHPC Congregational Meetings, Vol. X, Sept. 25, 1966, p. 409.

58. The conditions for the Burwell Historical Chapel were outlined in a letter to the Hoffman sisters by the Session, ensuring there would be no misunderstanding of exactly what the Elders wanted. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Apr. 9, 1967 and Mar. 10, 1968, pp. 171 and 199.

59. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X Feb. 9-Apr. 13, 1969, pp. 235-243.

60. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, May 31 and July 12, 1970, pp. 315 and 325.

61. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Mar. 14-Apr. 18, 1971, pp. 11, 15.

62. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. XI, Oct. 10, 1971, pp. 397-417.

63. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Mar. 5, 1972, p. 61.
64. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Nov. 19, 1967 and May 19, 1968, pp. 183 and 205.
65. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, May 16, 1971-Oct. 9, 1977, pp. 21-303.
66. NHPC Session Minutes, Vol. XII, Feb. 4, 1980 and Feb. 4, 1981, pp. 7 and 67 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. XII, Apr. 12, 1981, p. 271.
67. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vols. XII & XIII, Aug. 23, 1982-July 2, 1984, and Feb. 4, 1985, pp. 141-225 and 7 and NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. XII, Oct. 9, 1983 and Apr. 15, 1984, p. 293.
68. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XII & XIII, Apr. 5, 1982-Dec. 10, 1984, pp. 123-257.
69. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XIII, May 6, 1985-June 19, 1988, pp. 21-137.
70. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XIII, Jan. 12, 1987 and Apr. 24, 1988, pp. 83 and 135.
71. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XIII, Aug. 20, 1989-present, pp. 191-.

CHAPTER FIVE

SISTERS, SCHOOLS, AND SERVANTS

SISTERS

Women influenced New Hope from the beginning. The ladies faithfully served the church with little recognition, limited status, and negligible power for nearly two hundred years. Closed off from the official boards, the women still created places for themselves within the church.

Even before establishing a formal organization, the women provided for the needs of the congregation. Individual women bestowed gifts on the church, involving everything from communion ware to kitchen supplies. In 1886, three of the church's ladies, Miss Margaret Matthews, Mrs. Pegram, and Miss Sue Pegram, participated in the establishment of the Sabbath School.¹ Miss Matthews continued to lead Sunday School classes until the time of her death in 1917.² As early as 1899, a woman held the position of organist for the church.³ New Hope's first member in the Twentieth Century was a woman, Miss Mamie Ford.⁴ The women served the church admirably despite being shut off from the official leadership positions within the church.

Second class status for women only occurred within the offices of the church. Ladies convicted of sins received the same punishment as the men. Women were consistently suspended from the communion and ordinances of the church.⁵ Typical charges were fornication, dancing, and worldly amusement. Women were equal, but only insofar as the judgments the church rendered.

The place of women at New Hope was highly reflective of the practices and prejudices of the

times. In a Congregational Meeting in 1873 "...at a meeting of the male members of the church, the following persons were appointed Trustees of New Hope Church."⁶ All were men. As late as 1944, the congregation elected a Pastor's Search Committee "...to find a man for our pastor."⁷ Not until 1966 was a woman finally elected as a Trustee. No women served as Elders or Deacons before 1978. The role of women in the church grew very slowly.

An official women's organization began with the Ladies Society. Mrs. John B. (Allie Walker) Cochran established the Society on March 29, 1908 with thirty-five members.⁸ The next year the Society dropped to thirty members, but once begun the Society never disappeared. Only the Society's name changed over the years.

Shortly after the Cochrans left New Hope, the Ladies Society became the Woman's Missionary Society. Membership declined until only fifteen women belonged to the Society at the start of World War I. The number of women remained consistent throughout the war years, fluctuating between fifteen and eighteen members. As was typical of the times, the women did "inside work" and the men did "outside work."⁹ Mrs. John V. (Carrie McKee) Hanna was the first president of the Society who was not a minister's wife. Mrs. Hanna twice served as the Society's leader, 1915-1916 and 1918-1923. The name of the Society evidently lacked formal identification within the church, being referred to both as the Woman's or Ladies Missionary Society. However, the ladies ably served the church. In 1917 the women collected \$86.00 for all causes, a sizable sum in wartime.¹⁰ Still, the women's opportunities to serve the church remained limited.

Contributions by the women were often confined to domestic or traditional roles. In 1916 two women, Miss Junie Jackson and Mrs. Hattie Stowe, were asked to be part of a committee to investigate the constitution of

a proper choir. At the annual church picnic on the grounds, the women were requested to serve refreshments for the affair.¹¹ During the first third of the twentieth century, women's involvement changed little over the years.

Ten years of Depression significantly altered women's roles in the church. For the first time, women were chosen for a major committee. Mrs. Harris (Zoe) Boyd and Mrs. D. P. Hoffman were made members of the Building Committee for the major church renovation in 1931-32.¹² During the middle of the 1930's the Woman's Missionary Society presented the church with a new pulpit Bible. In 1937 the name of the women's organization was changed again, becoming The Woman's Auxiliary. Perhaps the most meaningful event during the decade was the naming of Mrs. Fred (Clara) Dixon as the church's Treasurer of Benevolences.¹³ Following Mrs. Dixon's assumption of the job, the position remained in the able hands of the women through the Second World War. At differing times in the late thirties and the early forties, Mrs. Emily Ratchford, Mrs. Zoe Boyd, and Miss Frankie Dixon held the office. Midway through the war, the men on the Session finally insisted that the treasurer's job be returned to a man. The position was restored to a man, but the decision signaled the mounting recognition women were gaining in the church.

As the post-war years effected a national upheaval, so the post-war years turned New Hope upside down. The Pastor's Search Committee may have been assigned "to find a man," but the Committee included the first women ever to serve in that capacity for the church. Mrs. Ralph (Mary John) Barrett was elected from The Woman's Auxiliary and Miss Nancy McLean from the Young People.¹⁴ Progress on one front for the women was offset by the walls of tradition in other areas. The offices of Elder and Deacon remained closed to women despite the nearly doubling of the size of both boards.

Women were only considered suited for playing the organ, teaching Sunday School, or doing the domestic work around the church. Still, the late forties brought the women some increased recognition. Several substantial memorial gifts were made in the names of women who had been long-time and faithful members. Real advances finally resulted for the church's women in the fifties.

The post-war years marked an immediate transformation for New Hope's ladies. Adopting the denomination-wide name change, the women's organization became known as the Women of the Church. For the first time the women on a church committee outnumbered the men, with the Furnishings Committee for the refurbishing of the old schoolhouse including: Mrs. Fred Dixon and Mrs. T. P. Elrod.¹⁵ Again, women were elected in 1951 to serve on a Pastoral Search Committee for the church. Mrs. T. P. Elrod and Miss Bobbie Brandon participated in the calling of S. D. Winn.¹⁶ Despite the progress made by the women, the old ways still died hard.

Music remained a woman's domain in the thinking of the congregation. Only Lee Dameron's years as organist broke the stranglehold by women on the position. In 1956 Mrs. Marshall (Eunice, "Mama") Reid replaced Miss Ruth Kendrick as the church's organist.¹⁷ The same year a junior choir was started by Mrs. Paul (Frances) Moore.¹⁸ Near the end of the fifties the Session hired the church's first paid choir director, a woman, Mrs. Wilma Smith. The music program stayed in the hands of the women for some time.

Increased status for the women skyrocketed in the sixties and the seventies. The 1960's began with two women named to the Building Committee for the new sanctuary, Miss Ida Hoffman and Mrs. William T. McLean.¹⁹ The Women of the Church added a fourth Circle to the organization.²⁰ The same year Mrs. Joel (Martha Ann) Kendrick led the church to sponsor Brownie

and Girl Scout troops. In the middle sixties New Hope arrived at a monumental turning point, Mrs. W. T. McLean was elected one of the church's Trustees.²¹ The Hoffman sisters, Ida and Zoe, pushed through the building of an historical chapel for the church. In 1968 Mrs. Jack (Beverly) Lineberger took over as the church's organist. Miss Donna Bezdek became the church's first Director of Christian Education. The conservative pastorate of D. C. White slowed New Hope's women's advances, but the years following White's tenure saw considerable advancement for women. In 1975 the first woman was nominated as a church officer. Three years later the first woman was elected. Mrs. Frank (Lois) Smith became the first woman to serve as an officer.²² The church agreed to support Miss Melanie Moore as a Volunteer in Mission.²³ Slowly, but surely, the women were being absorbed into the whole structure of the church.

Women's involvement expanded further during the eighties. The church heard a female ministerial candidate preach in 1980. Women in the church were instrumental in the initial planning and teaching for the New Hope Community School of the Arts. Mrs. Frank (Jane) Maske, Mrs. Jack (Beverly) Lineberger, and others helped organize and run the school in the beginning.²⁴ In 1984 the congregation elected Mrs. Fred (Nellie) Stowe as the church's first female Elder.²⁵ Miss Margaret Maske attended as a Youth Delegate to the Synod of N.C. for Concord Presbytery.²⁶ In 1988 another name change occurred for the women's organization, becoming the Presbyterian Women. The first Moderator was Mrs. C. Daniel (Penny) Wilson. Under the leadership of minister B. D. Weger, the Session elected Mrs. Frank (Jane) Maske as the first female Clerk of the Session in 1989.²⁷ By the end of the eighties all church offices were open to women.

During more recent years, the women undertook several substantial projects for the church. The

ladies provided cushions for the pews, made arrangements for flowers in the sanctuary during worship, and purchased a tractor lawnmower for the upkeep of the church grounds. In 1990 the women furnished the church parlor. Women contributed in a fundamental way to the maintenance and support of New Hope.

Over the centuries the women at New Hope have gradually become an integral part of the whole church. Shut out of the Board of Deacons and the Session for the majority of the church's existence, the women have only recently held leadership positions within the congregation. The contributions of the women in the life of the church have been enormous, but remain difficult to measure.

No era escaped without blessings from New Hope's women. In the early years, the ladies supplied stable home environments for the families of the church as well as for the future generations of the church. With the inception of the women's organization, the ladies began making a continual impact on the congregation's life. Women led in mission support and benevolences for special causes. By the onset of the modern era, the women's influence grew to be church-wide. Women assumed responsibility in every area of church life, from committee assignments to holding office. New Hope's women did not achieve equality overnight, but parity for women in New Hope did eventually arrive.

SCHOOLS

Education did not begin in the New Hope community with the church, but the church stands as a major contributor to the maintenance and advancement of education in the area. The roots of education in the community lie deep within the church. Ministers and members have nurtured learning from the very earliest years. Even before the introduction of public schools, New Hope has seen to the community's educational needs. Settlers, farmers, even suburbanites owe a great deal to the church for the origins, survival, and improvement of education in the southeastern part of Gaston County.

The arrival of James Davidson Hall brought formal education to the New Hope area. When Hall arrived in late 1846 or early 1847, he found a dismal lack of instruction in the community. No public schools existed and what schools did exist were of poor quality. Hall set about establishing a classical school. Since Hall's pastoral charges were Goshen, New Hope, and Olney, his school was probably in the vicinity of one of the three churches. He was the principal teacher. The boys came largely from the surrounding region of North Carolina as well as the upper part of South Carolina.²⁸ His school ultimately influenced a whole generation of leaders. Only the Civil War interrupted Hall's efforts to bring quality education to New Hope.

Following the war, education lagged behind in the South, and the New Hope area was no different. The community had no public schools. Some subscription schools did exist, but records of these schools no longer exist. Subscription schools were schools where several families banded together and hired a teacher to tutor the children in the homes. The subscription schools probably included New Hope families since there

was only one other church in the area. Not until sometime in the 1870's did public education come to the New Hope region of Gaston County.

New Hope's first school building was the home of Mr. Bisky Martin, located near the present site of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Craig's house.²⁹ Born in Lowell, N.C., Martin entered school teaching after losing his left arm in a molasses mill accident. As with subscription schools, Martin was paid by the parents and attendance was very irregular. Martin's school was the forerunner of public schools in the New Hope community.

The first public school reportedly was held in the New Hope "Session House." Prior to the erection of several one-room schoolhouses in the surrounding countryside, the church supplied space for the community's school children. The use of the church's facilities during the pioneering years of public education inaugurated a long and close relationship between the church and the schools.

At the same time that the "Session House" was employed as a school, the church also made available McLean's Chapel as a school. McLean's Chapel, built in 1890, served as the schoolhouse for the South Point community. School at the chapel was taught by the New Hope minister as well as by local public school teachers. Once again, the congregation willingly allowed the church's structure to be used for the education of the area's children.

New Hope community's first public school building stood on the site of the present manse. Constructed around 1900, the school replaced the county's use of the church's "Session House." The schoolhouse was a one room facility, housing all grades and having as many as 59 students. Drinking water was carried from the church's spring across the road. Gaston County owned and operated the school for about five years. Teachers in the school included Mr. Bisky Martin, Miss Margaret Matthews, the Rev. J. B. Cochran, and Miss

Martha Cathey. Both Matthews and Cochran were directly related to the church, Matthews being a life-time member and Cochran the minister from 1903 to 1909. In 1905 the church bought the structure, paying \$60.00.³⁰

After purchasing the one-room schoolhouse, the church operated a school in the building for two years. Cochran taught in the school until the church closed the facility in 1907. The building was sold for the same price that the church paid for the building. Member E. P. Lewis bought the structure for the lumber. Terminating the church's latest venture in education was the county's erection of a new schoolhouse.

In 1907 Gaston County built a two-room schoolhouse. The building, closer to the road than the previous structure, stood on the north side of Stowe Road and the west side of New Hope Road. The opening of the two-room school by the county closed the McLean's Chapel school. As with previous schools, a number of teachers came from the church's congregation.

Mrs. David Harrison, a church member, taught at the two-room school. Beginning in 1905, she was paid \$25.00 a month. Eventually, her salary was raised to \$30.00 a month, a school board member believing a teacher should have \$25.00 left after paying \$1.00 a week for room and board. Since school was only open four months, her salary was \$100.00 a year. She spent \$50.00 of her salary every summer to attend summer school to keep up with "...the new methods of teaching reading."³¹ The teachers and the schools continued to be integrally related to the church.

One of the earliest teachers from the church was Miss Margaret Matthews. Miss Matthews began teaching in subscription schools. Later, with the introduction of public education, she taught in most of the county schools in the area, including New Hope, McLean's Chapel, and Piney Grove. She lived on the Suggs-Lowell Road (now the Lowell-Bethesda Road), about halfway between New Hope and Lowell with her sister, Miss Beck

Matthews. Early in her career she walked to school every day. Often she stayed late to help the older children and did not arrive home until after dark. Miss Matthews also taught in the church as well as in the public schools.³²

When the church organized a Sabbath School in 1886, Miss Matthews was one of the initial teachers. She remained a Sunday School teacher at the church until her death in 1917, serving as one of New Hope's teachers for thirty-eight years.³³

The schoolhouse of 1907 lasted for over fifteen years. No minister from New Hope taught in the school, although some members were teachers in the two-room school. During the era of the second public school building, the county built a "teacherage" slightly north of the school. The "teacherage" housed the single female teachers until bought by long-time church member Schenck Craig.³⁴ Eventually, the county put up another school to replace the two-room structure.

A new consolidated brick school was built in 1921. The third New Hope schoolhouse sat behind the old frame structure. However, the county did not immediately abandon the use of the wooden school building. For at least two years, the community continued to need the two-room school as well as the new brick building. The modern brick school, built by the Rand Construction Company, had four large and two small classrooms. Several of the teachers and the first bus driver for the school came from the church. Teachers included: Mrs. Sloan Stowe, Mrs. Herman Ratchford, and Mrs. Marjory McLauchlin Lewis. The bus driver was George Ratchford. New Hope community's consolidated school once again was inextricably bound to the church.³⁵

During the years the brick school was open the church remained closely tied to the school. Large numbers of the congregation attended the consolidated school. Several members were teachers in the school,

including Miss Fannie Featherstone. Her brother, Coit Featherstone, served as custodian for the school, carrying water inside each morning, driving the school bus, and firing up the coal stove during the winter months.³⁶ Even after the larger school became the only structure being used, the church found a use for the old wooden building.

The old two-room frame structure was eventually torn down. Materials from the schoolhouse were carried across the street and used in renovating the church. The second building, like its predecessor, wound up in the church's hands.³⁷

After fifteen years, the brick schoolhouse was closed. Shutting the school's doors resulted from the New Hope community's shortsightedness as well as the financial difficulties of the times. Schools in Belmont and Gastonia lasted eight months, the result of a special tax voted to add two months to the school term. The county schools were only supported by the state for six months. New Hope community held a special election to extend the school term. The additional tax bill was defeated. Following the bill's defeat, parents began sending their children to Belmont and Gastonia, gradually reducing the school's enrollment. Two years before the county closed the school, grades four through seven were transferred to Belmont. The school operated its last year with only one teacher and three grades.³⁸

In 1936 Gaston County closed the New Hope school. Closing the school solved the church's dilemma about allowing the school to use the well at the manse.³⁹ For two years the building stood empty. During the summer of 1938, the County Commissioners gave the school to the church, deeded the land on which the school stood to the church, and bought a piece of property from the church.⁴⁰ For the third time the church owned the community's public school building.

Initially, the church did nothing with the

building. A church committee was organized to investigate ways the structure could be used. However, the Committee offered no suggestions for the building's use. Subsequently, New Hope utilized the schoolhouse in a previously unimagined manner.

The destruction of the church's manse by fire temporarily turned the schoolhouse into the minister's home. W. D. Wolfe and his family lived in the old schoolhouse for a short time until a new manse was constructed.⁴¹ Once the Wolfe's moved out, the building stood empty for several years.

Only towards the end of the forties did New Hope seriously look at what to do with the schoolhouse. Occasionally, the church used the building for meetings, classroom space, and other gatherings.⁴² Still, the church did not operate the facility on a regular basis. New Hope did not actually begin entertaining the idea of transforming the schoolhouse until the need for additional educational space became acute.

In 1949 the church moved the school building across the street next to the sanctuary, creating the church's first education building. New Hope's men built a foundation under the schoolhouse to house a fellowship hall, stage, and kitchen. The church converted the classrooms to Sunday School rooms, more than doubling the available educational space. New Hope wisely converted the old brick schoolhouse as New Hope had sensibly used the school's two predecessors.⁴³

Closing the consolidated school left the New Hope community without a school for nineteen years. The area sent their children to Belmont or to other surrounding communities. Finally, in 1955, Gaston County filled the vacancy with another building.

A school in the community once more generated strong bonds with the church. Even before the structure was completed, the principal, Mr. Wrather Johnson, approached the Session to use the church

basement for classes until the school building was finished.⁴⁴ Faculty again came from church members, including; teacher Miss Fannie Featherstone and dietitian Mrs. Lyndon (Ela) Wilson. Numerous children from the church attended and continue to attend the school.⁴⁵

The church's close ties with the public schools still persist today. Faculty at the New Hope school includes several members from the church: teachers, Mrs. Charles (Donna) Craig, Mrs. Reggie (Susan) Macon, and Mrs. Leonard (Mary Lou) Armstrong; and aides Mrs. Wayne (Mary) Lundquist and Mrs. Daniel (Kathy) Rowe. A significant number of the church's children attend the school, maintaining a tradition that began with the first public school. The school and the church continue to be bound by common interests and legacies.

The church's links to the New Hope school did not cease with the opening of the present facility. In 1963 the church granted the school permission to put a permanent sign on church property. The sign, a brick and stone marker, was placed on the northwest corner of New Hope and Stowe Roads. During the summer of the same year, the school allowed the church, along with neighboring churches, to hold a community-wide revival at the school, lasting for twelve days.⁴⁶ Interaction between the church and the school lagged over the next two decades with little or no involvement occurring until the early eighties. Two Elders served on a committee in 1982 for the development of school property for the community. The committee's work resulted in the church taking a special offering for the New Hope School Park campaign.⁴⁷ Modern-day cooperation between the church and the school dwindled in recent years.

The church's greatest modern change was the renovation of the old 1921 schoolhouse. After moving the school next to the church and using the building as an educational facility for thirty-five years, the

church recognized that the edifice had to be modernized. In 1984 the church completely refurbished the former school structure, restoring the brick facade the building had in the beginning. Renovation of the school building ensured the preservation of one of the landmark pieces of the community's history.

New Hope has enjoyed a long and unique relationship to the schools in the community. From the forerunners of public education to the present public facilities, the church has been intimately involved in education. The church has provided everything from teachers to classrooms for the community's children. Ministers and members have served as faculty for the schools since the beginning of educational efforts in the New Hope region. To a large extent, the church has furnished the impetus for starting and maintaining schools in the community. The support of New Hope has gone a long way in ensuring there were schools in the southeastern end of Gaston County.

SERVANTS

Blacks, while noticeably absent in today's church, were part of the church at the beginning. New Hope's black members enjoyed only a limited role in the church's life for nearly a century. The most significant era of black membership occurred while blacks were still slaves. The first Session minutes recorded black membership identically like whites. However, black membership gradually disappeared in the late 1800's. Sessional records gave little indication of what happened to the former slaves. Blacks left no lasting imprint on the New Hope congregation.

The earliest black members were slaves. New Hope's first roll listed 29 blacks as full, communing members.⁴⁸ The bulk of the blacks who joined the

church were female, but some were male. The initial Session entry for blacks occurred in 1840, reading: "Lizzy, a coloured woman, from the estate of Chittam."⁴⁹ Black members continued to be added for fifteen years, then the practice abruptly stopped. Miles Leander, a child of Granville and servant of Mr. Armstrong, united with the church on September 12, 1855, the last recorded slave joining the church.⁵⁰ Prior to 1855, blacks were received by the church in an identical manner as whites; after 1855 the church received no more slaves as members. The Session examined blacks on "experimental religion" and carried out baptisms if necessary, the same as with any other church member. On one occasion, the Session even appointed a committee to clear the way for a slave's membership. "Ginny....applied for admission as a member of the church, who was examined as to her acquaintance with experimental religion." The Session was only partially satisfied, there being a "..... difficulty in the way of her admission, appointed Mr. Gingles to inform her that unless it was removed, she could not be admitted."⁵¹ The next day the difficulty was removed and she was admitted and baptized. Most slaves came from established families in the church: the McLeans, the Gingles, and the Armstrongs.⁵² Black participation at New Hope was confined to membership, worship, and sacraments.

Slaves received Baptism and the Lord's Supper the same as whites. Baptism was administered to black infants and adults. The church roll reflected only slightly more black babies receiving baptism than black adults.⁵³ The Lord's Supper was dispensed in the same manner for blacks and whites. Blacks shared the common cup in communion.⁵⁴ However, blacks were not afforded equality in worship. New Hope's first sanctuary was only a single story structure, meaning either slaves sat in a designated area or with their owners. The church's second sanctuary was built with a "gallery," a

balcony in the rear of the church for the slaves. New Hope's "gallery" was used until the Session had it removed in the renovation of 1886-1887. Except for salvation, sacraments, and services, blacks played no part in the church's life.

Attitudes towards blacks only changed following the Civil War. For a year the church did nothing regarding the former slaves; then on May 13, 1866, "It was resolved that the Rev. B. L. Beall be requested to ask publicly that the coloured members of this church meet the Session during the interval of divine worship on the 4th Sabbath in this month, in order that we may confer with them in reference to their future relations to this church."⁵⁵ Two weeks later, May 27, 1866, four blacks appeared before the Session to indicate their desire to remain members of the church. The blacks were Mr. Julius McLean and his wife, Eliza Ann, David McLean, and Esther Eveline Armstrong.⁵⁶ The rest of the blacks either transferred to other churches or slipped away in the chaos of the times. As late as 1867, according to the General Assembly report of the Presbyterian Church U.S., New Hope still had twenty black members. Eventually, the numbers dwindled until the church had no black members by the 1880's.

The years preceding and following the Civil War created an unusual situation for the church regarding blacks. Prior to the war, blacks were known only by a given name. After the war, blacks were recognized as having first and last names. War not only changed the former slaves' status, but war changed how the church officially identified the former slaves.

Only one black joined the church following the Civil War. William Rhetta Johnston and Sarah C. McLean became members in 1873, the Session noting that the wife of the couple was coloured. Johnston's and McLean's membership proved troublesome from the beginning.

The husband, W. R. Johnston, created constant

difficulties for the couple. Johnston was brought up on charges for intoxication soon after he joined the church. He confessed his guilt and was retained as a member in good standing. Similar accusations were made against Johnston a few years later. The second time he told the minister he could not say if he would stop drinking and asked to be suspended. The Session agreed and suspended him indefinitely.⁵⁷ No record was ever made of what happened to S. C. McLean, his "coloured" wife. Following the unique circumstances of the Johnston and McLean case, references to blacks disappeared from the Session minutes for over half a century.

Not until the 1940's did New Hope again begin addressing the black-white issue. On an individual basis, many church members maintained ties to the black community in the New Hope area. Minister W. D. Wolfe helped black families and preached at the Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in the community.⁵⁸ In 1949 the Session invited the Lincoln Academy choir from the coloured high school to perform for the Young People on Race Relations Day in the Presbyterian Church U.S.⁵⁹ The church's initial progress was slight, but was the first break in the decades long discrimination against blacks.

Following World War II, some slight improvement continued in black relations. The church began the fifties by supporting the Negro Work Campaign, a program of Kings Mountain, Mecklenburg, and Concord Presbyteries. Over a three year period, New Hope pledged \$817 for the project.⁶⁰ In the sixties the church received an invitation to worship with the Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church, with a collection to be taken for the church's building program. New Hope responded to the same church after the church had experienced vandalism in 1983. The last thirty years brought no marked changed in the church's race relations.

New Hope's relationship with blacks has diminished

over the years rather than grown. During the era preceding the Civil War, slaves joined the church; following the war blacks exited from the church. No black person has been a member of the church for one hundred years. No black has ever been an officer in the church. More recent efforts to collaborate with blacks have been sporadic, never being concerted or consistent. The church's awareness of blacks has remained slight, even in modern times.

ENDNOTES - SISTERS

1. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Session Minutes, Vol. II, Apr. 10, 1886, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 71.

2. John B. Cochran, Historical Sketch of New Hope Presbyterian Church (Gastonia: Loftin & Co., Printers, 1906), p. 10.

3. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Apr. 19, 1899, p. 5.

4. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Jan. 14, 1900, p. 8.

5. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, June 10, July 8, 1888, and Sept. 28, 1891, pp. 80-82 and 107.

6. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Congregational Meetings, Vol. II, Aug. 10, 1873, p. 209.

7. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VI, Nov. 19, 1944, pp. 116-117.

8. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. III, Mar. 29, 1908, p. 83.

9. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, May 16, 1915 and Apr. 19, 1916, pp. 29 and 36-38.

10. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Apr. 4, 1918, p. 60.

11. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, June 11, 1916 and July 27, 1919, pp. 40 and 74.

12. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Dec. 13, 1931, p. 157

13. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, Mar. 22, 1937, p. 85.
14. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VI, Nov. 19, 1944, pp. 116-117.
15. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, Sept. 10, 1950, p. 280.
16. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, Apr. 8, 1951, p. 283.
17. Organist Ruth Kendrick resigned October 2, 1955, not to be replaced until the following year. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VIII, Oct. 2, 1955, p. 27.
18. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VIII Nov. 4, 1956, pp. 64-65.
19. NHPC, Congregational Meetings, Vol. IX, June 26, 1960, p. 182.
20. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IX, Apr. 1, 1962, p. 93.
21. NHPC, Congregational Minutes, Vol. X, June 6, 1966, p. 407.
22. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Jan. 8, 1978, p. 317.
23. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Nov. 14, 1976, p. 273.
24. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XII, June 6, 1983, p. 181.
25. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XII, Jan. 8, 1984, p. 203.
26. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XIII, Feb. 21, 1988, p. 131.
27. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XIII, Sept. 17, 1989, p. 201-203.

ENDNOTES - SCHOOLS

28. James D. Hall remained committed to education throughout his life. He started a school in the area when he served New Hope. He was one of the founders of Davidson College, and he was a Trustee of Union

Theological Seminary. I. S. McElroy, Some Pioneer Presbyterian Preachers of the Piedmont North Carolina (Gastonia: Loftin & Co., Printers, 1928) p. 31.

29. This is a personal account of Mr. Samuel Craig, 79 year old member of New Hope Presbyterian Church, passed on to him through his father and grandfather. Samuel Craig, Personal Reminiscence, May 13, 1992.

30. Ellen T. Sisk, Gston County Educational Heritage (Gastonia: Brumley Printing Co., 1957), p. 96.

31. Sisk, pp. 96-97.

32. Sisk, p. 97.

33. John B. Cochran, compiler Ida Hoffman, Historical Sketch of New Hope Presbyterian Church (Gastonia: Loftin & Co. Printers, 1943), p. 10.

34. Grace Craig, Personal Reminiscence, August 19, 1992.

35. Sisk, p. 97.

36. Coit Featherstone, Personal Reminiscence, May 12, 1992.

37. David Harrison, Personal Reminiscence, August 20, 1992.

38. Sisk, p. 97.

39. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Session Minutes, Vol. V, July 18, 1937, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 89.

40. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. V, July 10, 1938, p. 100.

41. Cochran, comp. Hoffman, p. 6.

42. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Moore, Personal Reminiscences, September 3, 1992.

43. New Hope Presbyterian Church, Congregational Meetings, Vol. VII, May 22-Sept. 10, 1949, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., pp. 278-280.

44. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Aug. 21, 1955, p. 23.

45. Sisk, p. 97.

46. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Feb. 3, and June

2, 1963, pp. 3 and 13.

47. The Elders on the committee for the use of school-park property were Harold Stowe, Jr. and Richard Eugene Martin. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XII, Nov. 1, 1982 and Jan. 3, 1983, pp. 152 and 161.

ENDNOTES - SERVANTS

48. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter referred to as NHPC), Session Minutes, Vol. 1, Membership Roll, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., pp. 20-67.

49. Lizzie, the first coloured member applied for membership to the church by herself. However, as a slave she was probably encouraged by her owner. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, Aug. 21, 1840, p. 68.

50. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. 1, Membership Roll, p. 67.

51. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, Aug. 21-22, 1840, pp. 68-69.

52. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. I, Membership Roll, pp. 20-55.

53. Ibid., pp. 20-67.

54. The communion ware of the church indicated that blacks could have shared a common cup with the whites. Still, considering the segregation of the races prior to and following the Civil War, a separate cup was probably used by blacks. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. 1, May 3, 1856, p. unnumbered.

55. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, May 13, 1866, p. 107.

56. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, May 27, 1866, p. 109.

57. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. II, Oct. 24, 1873, Nov. 23, 1873, Jan. 11, 1874, and Feb. 24, 1878, pp. 149-151 and 169.

58. Fred Stowe, Personal Reminiscence, Aug. 24, 1991.

59. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Jan. 30,
1949, p. 42.
60. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Mar. 29,
1953, p. 153.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PRESBYTERY CONNECTION

Presbyteries have been organized and have been involved during New Hope's two hundred years. From the church's beginnings under the Presbytery of Orange to the church's present existence under the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, New Hope has faithfully weathered the continual geographical changes. The church's placement in a myriad of presbyteries has never deterred the church from participation in the work of presbytery. From the very earliest days, New Hope has recognized the value of the relationship with presbytery.

During two centuries, the church belonged to ten different presbyteries. New Hope was organized under Orange Presbytery in 1793. After Orange Presbytery came Concord Presbytery, 1795-1824; Bethel Presbytery, 1824-1828; Concord Presbytery, 1828-1835; Morganton Presbytery, 1836-1840; Concord Presbytery, 1841- 1869; Mecklenburg Presbytery, 1869-1902; Kings Mountain Presbytery, 1902-1973; Concord Presbytery, 1973-1988; and Western North Carolina Presbytery, 1989-. Four times the church was in Concord Presbytery. The church existed in presbyteries in both Carolinas. At one time New Hope resided in a presbytery that encompassed the entire state of North Carolina and at another time resided in a presbytery that included only a few of the state's counties. The church outlived presbyteries of both long and short duration. New Hope recognized Presbytery as an integral part of the church from the beginning.

The church began in Orange Presbytery, but stayed only briefly. At the time of the church's organization, 1793, Orange Presbytery encompassed the entire state. In 1795 North Carolina was divided into Orange and Concord Presbyteries, placing the church

within the bounds of Concord Presbytery.

Removal to Concord Presbytery in 1795 began a long and fruitful relationship between the church and the presbytery. Concord Presbytery helped New Hope receive ministerial supplies, call pastoral leadership, and obtain formal organization. During the church's initial stint in Concord Presbytery, New Hope gained its first minister of record, Humphrey Hunter.¹ Presbytery officially recognized the church.² The earliest record of an Elder from New Hope attending presbytery occurred during the church's first sojourn within the presbytery.³ New Hope's only minister specifically ordained to serve the church came about during Concord Presbytery's oversight.⁴ Strong bonds formed early between the church and the presbytery.

After thirty years of stability, New Hope was wrenched from the bounds of Concord Presbytery. The formation of a new presbytery to the south of Concord thrust the church into an entirely new geographical configuration. New Hope's placement within another presbytery foreshadowed fifteen years of presbytery hopping for the church.

In 1824 the church was placed within the bounds of the newly created Bethel Presbytery. Along with all the North Carolina border churches in Mecklenburg, Lincoln, Cleveland, and Rutherford counties, New Hope was dismissed to the supervision of the third presbytery in the Synod of North Carolina.⁵ Discharging the church to the care of the upper South Carolina presbytery made explicit the church's close ties to the Bethel church. Bethel Presbytery's first report to the General Assembly indicated that John S. Adams, pastor at the Bethel church, supplied both congregations.⁶ Statistical reports counted New Hope's members with Bethel's. Not until the church was restored to Concord Presbytery did the rolls of the two churches cease to be computed as a single entry. The last "annexed report" to the General Assembly listed

the churches' combined membership at 571. However, after returning New Hope to Concord Presbytery's care, Bethel church only claimed 275 members. While figures would indicate that New Hope had a larger congregation than Bethel, such was not the case. As many as half New Hope's members belonged to Olney Presbyterian Church, located several miles north and west of Bethel and New Hope churches.⁷ However, the church's stay within Bethel Presbytery did precipitate two significant events. The church, under Bethel Presbytery, hosted its first presbytery meeting.⁸ At the meeting, the members assembled on several evenings for services by candlelight. As on prior occasions, Elder Samuel Gingles represented the church. In the midst of the same meeting, the first overture from New Hope was presented to the presbytery, asking the presbytery to allow correspondence and intercommunion with the Independent Presbyterian Church. After careful consideration of the request, the Presbytery turned down the application.⁹ One year after meeting at the church, Bethel Presbytery began deliberations over an issue that directly bore on the church's placement within presbytery.

Bethel Presbytery applied for membership within the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia. By 1828 the severing of Bethel Presbytery from the Synod of North Carolina was accomplished. All the North Carolina churches within the bounds of Bethel Presbytery were returned to Concord Presbytery, except one. For unidentified reasons, New Hope remained on the rolls of Bethel Presbytery for an additional year. The "annexed table" of 1829 noted: "New Hope congregation has been separated from Bethel & lying in N. Carolina, falls under the care of Concord Presbytery...Since last April the members belonging to New Hope & some to Olney have been separated from Bethel."¹⁰ New Hope's restoration to Concord Presbytery placed the church under the supervision of a North Carolina Presbytery, a tie never

again to be broken.

The church's stay in Concord Presbytery was short lived. After eight years in the presbytery, New Hope was shuffled to another presbytery. The extensive geographical boundaries had taxed the limited resources of Concord Presbytery, prompting the Synod of North Carolina to create an additional presbytery.

On April 14, 1836, the Presbytery of Morganton convened in the "...town of Morganton, in the county of Burke."¹¹ New Hope, by virtue of being in Lincoln County, was switched to the new presbytery. Placement within Morganton Presbytery, while brief, gave a significant boost to the church's observance of Presbyterian polity. Under Morganton Presbytery's direction, the church began to keep Session records. While within the presbytery, New Hope received its second and last minister, to date, for ordination.¹² As long as presbytery meetings were nearby, Elder Samuel Gingles attended. No other Elder from New Hope participated in the vast presbytery. After four years, the presbytery succumbed to the same problems that defeated its predecessor; too much territory and too few resources. At a called meeting on August 11, 1840, the presbytery agreed to "...send down to our churches, for consideration, the subject of applying to the Synod of North Carolina at its next meeting for the dissolution of Morganton Presbytery and its reunion with the Presbytery of Concord."¹³ The demise of the presbytery returned the church once again to familiar borders.

For almost thirty years, the church dwelt a third time within Concord Presbytery. Under the Presbytery's care, New Hope hosted its second presbytery meeting on October 10-12, 1844. As at New Hope's first presbytery meeting, several of the sessions were held by candlelight. Devotional exercises and the reading of scripture were led by a future minister of the church, James Davidson Hall. Present to represent the church

was Elder Robert A. Beaty.¹⁴ Again, the church overtured Presbytery to allow intercommunion with the Independent Presbyterians in 1845; again the Presbytery denied the overture.¹⁵ Elder Samuel Gingles represented the church during the church's third stint within Presbytery, but the church also began being represented by other Elders, including R. A. Beaty and Winchester Pegram. After election as an Elder in the 1850's, James W. Reid began serving from New Hope through much of the Civil War. Eventually, Reid's attendance at presbytery meetings spanned nearly half a century. As the aftermath of the war brought changes to the region, so the post-war years again brought presbytery changes for the church.

After the Civil War, New Hope was thrust into another geographical alignment, Mecklenburg Presbytery. At Morganton, N.C. on October 16, 1869 in the parlor of the home of Mrs. Robert Pearson, the Presbytery was organized. Representing the church at the initial meeting were minister, John J. Kennedy and Elder, Samuel W. Craig.¹⁶ While J. J. Kennedy was pastor at New Hope, he served as Moderator of Presbytery, the church's first acknowledged minister to serve in that capacity.¹⁷ During Mecklenburg's oversight, New Hope tried to organize a new church in 1871 in the Mesapotamia section of Gaston County. Presbytery's Committee on Bills and Overtures

"...made a report on the paper placed in their hands touching the organization of a church in the Fork of the Catawba and South Fork Rivers....and deems it inexpedient to grant at this time the petition of certain persons seeking the organization of a church in a portion of Gaston County known as Mesapotamia."¹⁸

The Presbytery felt that the petitioners' needs were being met by the currently established churches. In late 1892, the Presbytery employed a unique means of

determining the site of Mecklenburg's next presbytery meeting. "New Hope Church and Little Brittain Church were put in nomination; the roll was called and New Hope received a majority of the vote and was declared as the place for the next Fall meeting. The Pastor and Elder from New Hope were directed to fix the time and report before Presbytery adjourns."¹⁹ The Fall meeting of Presbytery was set for 11:00 a.m., October 23, 1873 at the church. Elder J. N. Hanna and the minister, J. J. Kennedy, composed the Devotional Exercises Committee. Hanna and Kennedy arranged preaching on Sunday morning in the sanctuary by Presbytery's Moderator R. H. Chapman and in the grove at the same time by the Rev. McDonald. Sacraments were administered by the Revs. Mr. McDonald, Turner, and Shotwell. Simultaneously, in the afternoon D. T. Fowler preached in the sanctuary and R. Z. Johnston preached in the grove. When Presbytery concluded the meeting two days later, a resolution expressed the "...thanks of Presbytery tendered to the congregation of New Hope by a standing vote, for their hospitality so cordially extended to the members on this occasion."²⁰ The presbytery meeting was the last to be held at the church for nearly sixty years.²¹ New Hope's Elder representation broadened throughout the church's remaining years within Mecklenburg Presbytery. Elders J. T. Dixon, J. L. Stowe, J. N. Hanna, and J. W. Reid attended presbytery at various times between 1869 and 1902. Gradually, the church's participation in the life of Presbytery grew.

New Hope's years within Mecklenburg Presbytery involved everything from the ordinary to the extraordinary. Presbytery, meeting at Sharon church on September 24, 1884, approved L. R. McCormick as the church's pastor for \$400 a year at one-half time. McCormick accepted the call and was received as a transfer from Bethel Presbytery. However, the call was never prosecuted; the Presbytery choosing to wait until

the next stated meeting to finalize McCormick's call. When the Mecklenburg Presbytery convened for the spring meeting at Paw Creek church on March 26, 1885, McCormick was transferred back to the care of Bethel Presbytery.²² New Hope had a minister for six months, who in reality was nothing more than an interim. In 1888 at First Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, N.C. "Mr. William C. Underwood, member of New Hope church, was introduced by his Pastor Brother McIlwain, who read a letter from the Session of New Hope Church commending Mr. Underwood as a worthy candidate for the Ministry: whereupon he was examined on experimental religion views of seeking the Ministry, received under care of Presbytery as a candidate for the Ministry."²³ Underwood was the first son of the church to be endorsed by the Session as a ministerial candidate. During the same decade, Elder J. W. Reid served on a Presbytery Committee to organize a Presbyterian Church of Lowell, N.C. New Hope was actively engaged in Presbytery during the eighties.

The church's last few years in Mecklenburg Presbytery resulted in little happening. Elders attended the regular stated Presbytery meetings with the ministers and Presbytery dismissing the church's ministers as the occasions arose. Nothing major impacted New Hope until a shift in the Presbytery's boundaries occurred.

Meeting in Winston-Salem, N.C. on October 21-24, 1902, the Synod of North Carolina created the Presbytery of Kings Mountain. The Presbytery organized at the First Presbyterian Church of Lincolnton, N.C. on November 18, 1902. New Hope's minister J. T. Wade was not present, nor was the church represented by an Elder.²⁴ The church's inauspicious start in the new Presbytery did not last for any length of time. New Hope enjoyed a long and cordial relationship with Kings Mountain Presbytery. Being a relatively small Presbytery, New Hope became deeply involved in the

Presbytery's ongoing operations. The church's stay in Kings Mountain Presbytery lasted seventy-one years, longer than in any other Presbytery.

New Hope's early participation in Kings Mountain Presbytery rarely extended beyond administrative duties. Ministers Burwell and McLauchlin served as Moderators; Burwell three times and McLauchlin six times. On another occasion the church sent a delegation of Elders to plead with Presbytery for financial help with the pastor's salary.²⁵ In June, 1917 Burwell attended General Assembly in Birmingham, Alabama as a Commissioner from the Presbytery.²⁶ During the first three decades of the 1900's, the church never hosted Presbytery. After the church's major renovation project of 1932, involvement in Presbytery increased substantially.

Following a break of more than fifty years, the church once more began hosting Presbytery. New Hope welcomed Kings Mountain Presbytery to the newly remodeled facilities on September 27-28, 1932.²⁷ Again, in 1939, 1951, 1958, 1963, and 1965, the church accommodated Presbytery. Once the breach was made, New Hope routinely hosted Presbytery.

Much of the credit for the church's renewed participation in Presbytery lay with Elder W. D. Lewis. Lewis served on numerous committees in the presbytery, becoming a familiar figure at presbytery. He helped spearhead the effort by the presbytery for a youth camp outside of Tryon, N.C.²⁸ As Clerk of the Session, Lewis wielded considerable influence for the church within presbytery.

New Hope's involvement in presbytery increased considerably in the 1940's. After a hiatus of fourteen years, W. D. Wolfe moderated Presbytery three consecutive times in 1940.²⁹ He became, in 1942, the second minister from the church to act as a Minister Commissioner to the General Assembly of the P.C.U.S. Members James Edward Craig in 1947 and George Edward

Dameron in 1948 came under care of the Presbytery as candidates for the ministry.³⁰ Elder Fred Dixon attended General Assembly in Atlanta, Georgia in June, 1948 as an Elder Commissioner from Presbytery.³¹ New Hope's sudden burst of Presbytery activity did not last into the fifties.

Little occurred between the church and the presbytery until the convulsions of the sixties. Following the retirement of W. D. Lewis as Clerk of Session, New Hope's efforts with Presbytery ebbed. The fifties passed with only minimal contact between the church and the Presbytery.

By the 1960's a revived link to Presbytery began with little fanfare. Miss Dorothy Ray, D.C.E. for the Presbytery, held a Church School Clinic for a week at the church in 1961.³² The next year, Elder James L. Brandon attended General Assembly in Winston-Salem, N.C. as an Elder Commissioner for the Presbytery.³³ The church participated in a Presbytery-wide evangelistic campaign in 1963. The church's relationship with Presbytery gradually improved until the Presbytery's final years.

Towards the end of the sixties, New Hope's partnership with Presbytery swiftly deteriorated. Beginning in 1969, the church reduced Presbytery benevolences. The Session sent a resolution to Presbytery opposing union presbyteries and synods.³⁴ On the positive side, the Women of the Church hosted the W.O.C. Presbyterial in the spring of 1970.³⁵ On the negative side, the church ran into a jurisdictional dispute between Presbytery and the Synod of N.C. over loan procedures.³⁶ In 1971 the Session sent an overture to Presbytery to object to the merger of presbyteries by the Synod of N.C.³⁷ Later that same year the Session voted to back Presbytery benevolence askings, but chose to designate the giving to Presbytery. The friction between the church and the Presbytery reached a point that Elder Richard Voorhees

from the First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia, N.C. attended a Session meeting as a listener. Voorhees sought to find out how the Presbytery could help the church.³⁸ Eventually the difficulties resulted in a resolution for the church to leave the denomination. The effort failed. New Hope remained in the P.C.U.S., even though the church was once more consigned to another Presbytery.

In 1973 the church returned to Concord Presbytery. The realignment of the Synod of N.C. restored New Hope to a Presbytery where the church had resided on three previous occasions. During the church's fourth tenure in Concord Presbytery, the church returned to a more traditional relationship with Presbytery.

New Hope's fifteen years in Concord Presbytery were a satisfactory time for the church. J. L. Brandon, while not being elected, was nominated by the Session as a delegate to General Assembly two more times. Once again the church accepted the full benevolent asking figure from Presbytery. On April 4, 1978 the church hosted the Presbytery, after a thirteen year hiatus.³⁹ A request by the Presbytery's Church Development Committee for a pledge of \$15-16,500 as New Hope's "fair share" was rejected.⁴⁰ However, at the time of the appeal, the church was preparing a major renovation of the church's educational building. Several members of the congregation served on Presbytery committees. Near the end of Concord's existence, New Hope overtured Presbytery to retain the Montreat Historical Foundation. Little of great import occurred during the church's fourth turn in Concord Presbytery.

January 1, 1989 sent New Hope into its tenth Presbytery, the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. Relationships were cordial from the beginning. Beginning in 1990, church members participated in the Presbytery Mission Teams to Mexico and Nicaragua. A loan to fix the sanctuary was negotiated with the Presbytery. One member of the church served on

Presbytery's staff, working as the Resource Center Director for the eastern half of the Presbytery. The church entered its Bicentennial with strong ties with the Presbytery.

New Hope has persisted through two centuries and ten Presbyteries. The church's location has tossed the church back and forth between alliances with the western part of the state and alliances with the urban area of Charlotte. During the early presbyteries, the tremendous geographical expanses often left New Hope with only part-time support. In the larger presbyteries, the church has been edged to the sidelines by the more prominent churches; in the smaller presbyteries the church has thrived and contributed significantly. Presbytery has met ten times at New Hope; the first time being in 1825 and the last time being in 1978. Several ministers have served as Moderators of Presbytery, but no Elder has ever served in that capacity. Differing presbyteries have provided sustentation for the church, ranging from financial aid for the minister in Kings Mountain Presbytery to ministerial supplies through Orange and Concord Presbyteries. The church has been loyal, unwilling to withdraw from the denomination or refusing to support the Presbytery. Except for a brief sojourn in a South Carolina Presbytery, the church has always been affiliated with presbyteries in North Carolina. New Hope has grown in its work with and for Presbytery.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER SIX

1. Presbytery of Concord (hereafter known as CP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Apr. 6, 1808, Department of History, Montreat, N.C. p. 216.

2. CP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Apr. 7, 1814, p. 306.

3. Elder Samuel Gingles was recorded as attending

the first Presbytery meeting for New Hope Presbyterian Church at Goshen Presbyterian Church. CP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Apr. 5, 1814, p. 368.

4. Henry M. Kerr was ordained as minister of the Long Creek, New Hope, and Olney Presbyterian Churches on the second Wednesday of January, 1817. CP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Sept. 3-4, 1816, p. 419.

5. Presbytery of Bethel (hereafter known as BP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Nov. 5, 1824, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 6.

6. The General Assembly reports for the entire time New Hope resided within the bounds of Bethel Presbytery listed the minister from the Bethel church as New Hope's minister. BP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Nov. 5, 1824, p. 8.

7. BP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. 1, Oct. 1, 1825 and Oct. 2, 1829, pp. 22 and 62.

8. BP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. 1, Apr. 1, 1825, p. 11.

9. BP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Oct. 1, 1825, pp. 17-18.

10. BP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Oct. 2, 1829, p. 62.

11. Presbytery of Morganton (hereafter known as MP), Presbtery Minutes, Vol. I, Apr. 14, 1836, p. 5.

12. The ordination and installation of William N. Morrison took place at the Goshen Presbyterian Church. However, while Morrison was minister at Goshen, he was also part-time minister at New Hope. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Nov. 9, 1837, p. 44.

13. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Aug. 11, 1840, p. 128.

14. CP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. IV, Oct. 10, 1844, pp. 299-303.

15. CP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. IV, Oct. 13, 1845, pp. 534-535.

16. Presbytery of Mecklenburg (hereafter known as MP), Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Oct. 16, 1869,

Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 3.

17. John J. Kennedy served as the Moderator of Mecklenburg Presbytery on September 8, 1870 in Franklin, N.C. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. 1, Sept. 8, 1870, p. 52.

18. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Sept. 21, 1871, pp. 131-145.

19. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Apr. 23, 1873, pp. 206-219.

20. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. I, Oct. 23-25, 1873, pp. 238-256.

21. New Hope Presbyterian Church did not host another Presbytery meeting following the Mecklenburg Presbytery meeting in 1873 until Kings Mountain Presbytery met at the church in 1932. Presbytery of Kings Mountain (hereafter known as KMP), Presbytery Minutes, 61st Stated Session, Sept. 27-28, 1932, Department of History, Montreat, N.C., p. 1.

22. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. III, Sept. 24, 1884-Mar. 26, 1885, pp. 144-145 and 168.

23. MP, Presbytery Minutes, Vol. IV, Dec. 4, 1888, pp. 73-74.

24. KMP, Presbytery Minutes, 1st Stated Session, Nov. 18-19, 1902, pp. 3-5.

25. New Hope Presbyterian Church (hereafter known as NHPC), Session Minutes, Vol. IV, Apr. 11, 1915, Department of History, Montreat, NC., p. 28.

26. Richard S. Burwell was the first confirmed minister or Elder to attend the General Assembly from New Hope. However, the obituary for James W. Reid, entered in the Session records, listed him as the first Commissioner from the church to attend the General Assembly. Extensive research did not corroborate the contention that Reid was first to be a Commissioner from New Hope. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IV, May 6, 1917, p. 51.

27. KMP, Presbytery Minutes, 61st Stated Session, Sept. 27-28, 1932, p. 1.

28. W. D. Lewis sought to raise New Hope's share of the Presbytery's funds necessary to purchase a youth camp outside of Tryon, N.C. by a special offering. The church's portion of the cost was \$500.00. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, May 22, 1949, pp. 52-53.

29. KMP, Presbytery Minutes, 76th Stated Session, 77th Called Session, and 78th Called Session, Apr. 9-10, May 20, and June 5, 1940, pp. 8, 4, and 6.

30. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, July 6, 1947 and June 13, 1948, pp. 23 and 37.

31. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. VII, Mar. 28, 1948, p. 30.

32. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IX, Jan. 22, 1961, p. 55.

33. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. IX, June 10, 1962, p. 100.

34. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Jan. 26, 1969, p. 227.

35. NHPC Session Minutes, Vol. X, Mar. 2, 1969, p. 237.

36. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. X, Dec. 13, 1970, pp. 346-347.

37. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, May 16, 1971, p. 19.

38. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XI, Mar. 12, 1972, p. 63.

39. CP, Presbytery Minutes, 24th Stated Session, Apr. 4, 1978, p. 1.

40. NHPC, Session Minutes, Vol. XII, June 7, 1982, p. 135.

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General

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General

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Local

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General Assembly

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MINISTERS OF NEW HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Itinerant Ministers	1793 -	1805
Humphrey Hunter	1805 -	1813
James S. Adams	1813 -	1817
Henry M. Kerr	1817 -	1819
James S. Adams	1819 - Nov.	1827
Samuel Lytle Watson	Nov. 1827 -	1837
William Newton Morrison	Nov. 9, 1837 - Sept. 12,	1839
John S. McCutchan	Apr. 22, 1840 -	1846
James Davidson Hall	May 1, 1847 - June 5,	1864
Benjamin Leander Beall	Oct. 27, 1865 - Apr. 27,	1867
John Joseph Kennedy	Sept. 3, 1867 - May 2,	1883
Leslie Rainey McCormick	Sept. 24, 1884 - Mar. 25,	1885
William E. McIlwain	May 23, 1885 - Dec. 29,	1889
Robert Alexander Miller	Feb. 8, 1891 - Apr. 12,	1901
Joel Taylor Wade	June 16, 1901 - June 18,	1903
John Brice Cochran	July 12, 1903 - Dec. 31,	1909
Richard Spotswood Burwell	Mar. 27, 1910 - Nov. 11,	1917
Hinton Raleigh Overcash	June 9, 1918 - Apr. 4,	1920
Archie McLauchlin	Mar. 20, 1921 - May 20,	1928
Louis Key Martin	July 14, 1929 - Dec. 10,	1933
William Davis Wolfe	Oct. 7, 1934 - Oct. 29,	1944
John Henry Knight	Nov. 4, 1945 - Jan. 7,	1951
Samuel Dwight Winn	Apr. 8, 1951 - June 21,	1953
John Hamilton Buzhardt	Aug. 1, 1954 - Mar. 14,	1961
Edwin Oscar Byrd, Jr.	Sept. 1, 1961 - Mar. 20,	1966
Archie Davis	Oct. 9, 1966 - Aug. 31,	1969
David Carlton White	Dec. 14, 1969 - Apr. 1,	1973
William Frye Summers, Jr.	Mar. 1, 1974 - July 31,	1979
Robert LeRoy Hennessee	Dec. 1, 1979 - June 30,	1981
James Mitchell Cockerham	Apr. 1, 1982 - July 31,	1988
Brian Dale Weger	July 15, 1989 -	

DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Donna Bezdek	Feb. 4, 1968 - Feb. 28, 1971
LaRue Allison Moore (Mrs. Oren)	Sept. 8, 1974 - Sept. 15, 1978
Barbara Palmer (Mrs. Forrest)	Aug. 8, 1983 -
Victoria Louise Moss	Aug. 5, 1985 - Mar. 9, 1989

CLERKS OF SESSION

Winchester Pegram	May 20, 1843 - Oct. 5, 1846
Robert A. Beaty	May 1, 1847 - Apr. 3, 1853
James W. Reid	Aug. 20, 1853 - Dec. 31, 1891
John W. Gaston	Jan. 9, 1892 - Apr. 29, 1906
G. Logan McKee	June 10, 1906 - Dec. 12, 1907
John Wilson Lowry	Dec. 15, 1907 - June 10, 1917
W. Thomas Ford	July 1, 1917 - Aug. 4, 1918
Joseph T. Ratchford	Aug. 4, 1918 - Aug. 24, 1918
John M. Kendrick	Aug. 24, 1918 - Apr. 17, 1927
William Dixon Lewis	Aug. 7, 1927 - Nov. 28, 1954
James Leonard Brandon, Sr.	Nov. 28, 1954 - Dec. 31, 1963
Fred Lee Dixon	Jan. 1, 1964 - Mar. 14, 1965
Charles Henry Brandon	Mar. 21, 1965 - Jan. 26, 1969
John Harry Hancock	Jan. 26, 1969 - Dec. 28, 1969
John Dickson Elkins	Jan. 11, 1970 - Jan. 9, 1972
John Harry Hancock	Feb. 13, 1972 - Dec. 31, 1974
Charles Henry Brandon	Jan. 1, 1975 - Jan. 9, 1977
David Phillips White, Jr.	Jan. 9, 1977 - Jan. 7, 1979
Frank Crawford Maske	Jan. 8, 1979 - Jan. 3, 1982
Donald Earl Osborne	Jan. 4, 1982 - Dec. 18, 1985
Richard Eugene Martin	Jan. 5, 1986 - Dec. 15, 1987
James L. Brandon, Jr.	Jan. 17, 1988 - Aug. 27, 1989
Jane Emery Maske (Mrs. Frank C.)	Sept. 17, 1989 - Jan. 6, 1991
Thomas McKnight Graham	Jan. 20, 1991 - Nov. 17, 1991
Frank Crawford Maske	Jan. 19, 1992

ELDERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE ORDAINED/ INSTALLED</u>	<u>DATE OF DEATH</u>
Baird, James C.	1822	Apr. 22, 1860
Baird, Samuel F. D.	Aug. 3, 1862	May 31, 1863
Barnes, Thomas Marshall	Dec. 11, 1955	
*Barrett, James Ralph	Dec. 29, 1968	
Beaty, Robert A.	May 1830	July 8, 1866
*Blalock, William H., Jr.	Jan. 7, 1990	
*Boyd, Isaac Harris	Dec. 11, 1955	Apr. 5, 1991
Brandon, Charles Henry	Nov. 13, 1960	
*Brandon, James Leonard, Sr.	Apr. 6, 1952	
*Brandon, James Leonard, Jr.	Dec. 6, 1987	
*Brandon, Louise Roach (Mrs. J. Leonard, Sr.)	Jan. 6, 1991	
*Brandon, William Sylvester	July 26, 1914	Feb. 15, 1962
Broome, James Raymond	Dec. 11, 1955	
Craig, Samuel W.	May 31, 1851	July 20, 1873
Craig, Samuel N.	Apr. 13, 1906	Dec. 4, 1910
Dickson, John Thomas	Dec. 10, 1871	June 27, 1890
Dixon, Palmer Mott	Mar. 12, 1939	Oct. 2, 1950
*Dixon, Fred Lee	Mar. 31, 1946	Dec. 10, 1987
*Dixon, Henry Mott	Nov. 22, 1959	
*Eargle, Roger C.	Dec. 6, 1987	
*Elkins, John Dickson	Nov. 29, 1959	
Elrod, T. P.	Apr. 6, 1952	
*Enloe, Suzanne McLean, Ms.	Jan. 6, 1991	
Ford, Daniel	1851	
Ford, Lawrence Russell	Aug. 28, 1921	Nov. 12, 1981
Ford, William G.	Sept. 28, 1873	Mar. 12, 1876
Ford, W. Thomas	July 26, 1914	July 27, 1919

ELDERS

Gaston, John M.	Oct. 25, 1891	June 10, 1906
Gingles, Samuel (From Bethel, SC)	1813	Dec. 17, 1856
Glover, Thomas Berry	Nov. 29, 1959	June 14, 1967
*Goodrich, Joel Duncan, II	Dec. 26, 1982	
*Graham, Thomas McKnight	Jan. 11, 1981	
Gullick, John A.	Nov. 26, 1899	Aug. 4, 1903
*Hancock, John Harry	Dec. 11, 1955	
Hanna, John Newton	Sept. 28, 1873	June 1922
Harris, Carter Thomas	Dec. 11, 1955	1961
Harris, William Frederick, Sr.	Jan. 1, 1959	Oct. 11, 1959
*Harrison, David A.	Dec. 26, 1971	
Harrison, John W.	Aug. 28, 1921	Apr. 1, 1934
*Jackson, Robert W., Sr.	Jan. 7, 1979	
*Jackson, Sara Fowler (Mrs. Robert W.)	Apr. 27, 1986	
Jackson, Thomas Larkin	Jan. 4, 1970	Apr. 2, 1976
*Kendrick, Joel Pickney	Jan. 13, 1985	
Kendrick, John Marcus	Apr. 13, 1906	May 24, 1941
Kendrick, Robert William	Dec. 24, 1961	Feb. 26, 1985
Lewis, Edwin Perry	Dec. 19, 1965	Feb. 15, 1978
Lewis, John J.	Mar. 23, 1902	June 16, 1912
Lewis, Ura Lee, Sr.	Mar. 31, 1946	Feb. 21, 1960
*Lewis, Ura Lee, Jr.	Dec. 31, 1972	
*Lewis, William Dixon	Jan. 23, 1927	Aug. 15, 1979
Lowry, John Wilson	Apr. 13, 1906	Mar. 22, 1919
*Lundquist, Wayne Lionel	Jan. 4, 1980	
*Martin, Richard Eugene	Jan. 13, 1985	
Matthews, John Palmer	Aug. 14, 1870	Jan. 29, 1888
*Maske, Frank Crawford	Jan. 30, 1977	

ELDERS

*Maske, Jane Emery (Mrs. Frank C.)	Dec.	6, 1987	
McKee, G. Logan	Oct.	25, 1891	
*McLean, Betty Huffstetler (Mrs. Joe C.)	Jan.	7, 1990	
McLean, William R.	Aug.	12, 1866	(Susp. May 26, 1872)
McLean, William Thomas	Jan.	1, 1959	Apr. 11, 1966
Nolen, William M.	Aug.	3, 1862	
Nolen, W. W.	Dec.	10, 1871	June 27, 1890
*Osborne, Donald Earl	Dec.	29, 1974	
Pegram, Winchester	Apr.	23, 1843	June 15, 1851
*Piercy, Mary Eugenia Rollins (Mrs. R. F.)	Jan.	8, 1989	
*Piercy, Ransom Fletcher, Jr.	Jan.	5, 1986	
*Presley, Eric Carroll	Jan.	4, 1980	
Ratchford, Fred Hanna	Mar.	12, 1939	June 19, 1970
Ratchford, Joseph Fisher	Mar.	23, 1902	Sept. 9, 1949
Reid, James W.	May	31, 1851	May 15, 1894
*Sherrill, Tweete H.	Mar.	31, 1946	Aug. 14, 1961
*Smith, Gordon Franklin	Jan.	30, 1977	
*Smith, Ralph Lester	Dec.	28, 1986	
Stowe, Charles Mack	Jan.	15, 1967	
Stowe, E. B.	Aug.	14, 1870	
*Stowe, Fred Reece, Sr.	Dec.	24, 1961	
*Stowe, Harold Rudolph, Sr.	Jan.	18, 1976	
Stowe, John Logan	Sept.	28, 1873	Dec. 30, 1905
Stowe, Nellie Bailey (Mrs. Fred R.)	Jan.	8, 1984	Dec. 7, 1985
*Turnipseed, Andrew James	Jan.	1, 1964	

ELDERS

White, David Phillips, Jr.	Dec. 29, 1974	
*Williams, Edward Malcolm	Dec. 31, 1967	
*Wilson, Allen Leon	Dec. 11, 1981	
**Wilson, Lyndon Grier	Jan. 23, 1927	June 29, 1973

*Elders who are members of the congregation in October 1992

**Elders Emeritus

DEACONS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE ORDAINED/ INSTALLED</u>	<u>DATE OF DEATH</u>
Allison, Thomas L.	Oct. 25, 1891	Feb. 6, 1927
Baird, Samuel F.	Mar. 27, 1859	
*Barrett, James Ralph	Mar. 31, 1946	
*Blackman, Daniel Chap	Jan. 5, 1992	
*Blalock, William H., Jr.	Jan. 5, 1986	
Boyd, Isaac Harris	Jan. 2, 1932	Apr. 5, 1991
Bradshaw, Coy	Jan. 13, 1985	
Brandon, Charles Henry	Jan. 1, 1958	
*Brandon, James L., Jr.	Dec. 26, 1982	
Brendle, Rudolph B.	Dec. 30, 1956	
Brown, Gist	Jan. 4, 1970	
*Byers, Nancy (Mrs. Barry R.)	Jan. 7, 1990	
Capps, Ottie Alexander	Apr. 25, 1943	Jan. 5, 1978
Carpenter, David	July 1, 1990	
Carroll, William III	Jan. 18, 1976	
Carter, Elizabeth Medford (Mrs. Gregory)	Jan. 5, 1992	
Clinton, Thadius	Aug. 10, 1873	
Cox, Eli	Mar. 27, 1859	
Craig, Ralph Ray	Jan. 15, 1967	
*Craig, Samuel Newton	Jan. 1, 1959	
Craig, Samuel N.	Apr. 13, 1902	
Craig, Schenck	Mar. 31, 1946	Apr. 17, 1975
*Dameron, Danny Lee	Jan. 18, 1976	
*Dameron, Richard	Dec. 31, 1967	
Dameron, Robert Lee	Mar. 27, 1910	July 24, 1966
Dameron, William Grover	Mar. 31, 1946	May 26, 1971
Dickson, John Neely	Mar. 23, 1902	Jan. 24, 1929

DEACONS

Dixon, Palmer Mott	Jan. 2, 1932	Oct. 2, 1950
Dixon, R. Sloan	Feb. 6, 1927	Apr. 19, 1945
Dixon, Archie Holland	Mar. 31, 1946	Jan. 6, 1969
*Dixon, Delores Huggins (Mrs. Archie W.)	July 1, 1990	
Dixon, Fred Lee	May 19, 1929	Dec. 10, 1987
*Dixon, Henry Mott	Apr. 6, 1952	
Drechsler, David	Jan. 8, 1989	
*Elkins, Doris Yeargin (Mrs. John D.)	Jan. 13, 1985	
*Elkins, John Dickson	Dec. 30, 1956	
*Enloe, Suzanne McLean Ms.	Dec. 6, 1987	
*Faris, Joe	Dec. 26, 1982	
*Featherstone, Coit Wilson	Dec. 11, 1955	
Finger, John R.	Dec. 27, 1970	
Fisher, Mark	Jan. 8, 1984	
Ford, Irvin	1841	
Ford, James H.	Mar. 27, 1859	
Ford, W. Thomas	Apr. 13, 1906	July 26, 1914
Gettys, Ralph A.	Nov. 29, 1959	
*Glenn, William Garland	Jan. 13, 1985	
Glover, Thomas Berry	May 19, 1929	June 14, 1967
Glover, Tommy Dean	Nov. 29, 1959	
*Goodrich, Gayle (Mrs. Joel D.)	Jan. 7, 1990	
*Goodrich, Joel Duncan, Jr.	Jan. 3, 1982	
*Graham, Thomas McKnight	Jan. 7, 1979	
Graves, Gary	Dec. 26, 1982	
Green, Howard	Jan. 30, 1977	
Gullick, Andrew	1841	
Guy, Alfred L.	May 13, 1911	Oct. 17, 1914

DEACONS

Hall, James Caldwell, Jr.	Dec. 16, 1973	
Hanna, John Vance	Apr. 13, 1906	Aug. 18, 1951
Harris, William F. Sr.	Dec. 11, 1955	Oct. 27, 1976
*Harrison, David A.	Apr. 25, 1943	
Harrison, Howard G.	Mar. 31, 1946	Aug. 31, 1951
Harrison Robert R.	Nov. 26, 1899	May 18, 1912
Harrison, R. Lee	Apr. 4, 1915	June 11, 1963
Henderson, Augustun L.	Mar. 27, 1859	
Hoffman, Charles C.	July 26, 1914	Feb. 21, 1915
*Hovis, Stanley Kiser	Jan. 6, 1991	
*Jackson, Robert W., Sr.	Dec. 28, 1986	
Jackson, Thomas Larkin	Dec. 23, 1962	Apr. 2, 1976
*Kendrick, Joel Pickney	Nov. 13, 1960	
Kendrick, John Clifford	Jan. 23, 1927	Oct. 31, 1967
Kendrick, John Marcus	Oct. 25, 1891	May 24, 1941
Kendrick, Robert William	Dec. 30, 1956	Feb. 26, 1985
Kincaid, Gilmour A.	Mar. 31, 1946	
Leeper, Franklin W.	July 26, 1868	
Lewis, Edwin Perry, Sr.	Jan. 1, 1955	Feb. 15, 1978
Lewis, Enoch Perry	Mar. 23, 1902	Nov. 11, 1927
Lewis, George R.	Mar. 27, 1910	
Lewis, John J.	May 23, 1902	
*Lewis, Ura Lee, Jr.	Dec. 24, 1961	
*Lineberger, Beverly		
Jordan (Mrs. Jack R.)	Jan. 11, 1981	
*Lineberger, Jack R.	Dec. 19, 1965	
Lowry, James Daniel, Sr.	Jan. 18, 1976	Mar. 9, 1982
Lundquist, Gary Len	Dec. 31, 1972	
*Lundquist, Leonard Malcolm	Dec. 6, 1987	
*Lundquist, Wayne Lionel	Jan. 30, 1977	
*Martin, Richard Eugene	Jan. 13, 1980	
Martin, William G.	Nov. 22, 1868	

DEACONS

*Maske, Frank Crawford	Dec. 26, 1971	
*Maske, Jane Emery (Mrs. Frank C.)	Dec. 26, 1982	
Mason, John N.	Dec. 23, 1962	
Matthews, John Palmer	July 26, 1868	Jan. 29, 1888
McCluney, Richard Clark	Jan. 7, 1979	Nov. 6, 1983
*McLean, Betty Huffstetler (Mrs. Joe C.)	Jan. 8, 1984	
*McLean, Joe Cramer	Jan. 1, 1958	
McLean, John B.	Apr. 13, 1902	Apr. 11, 1966
McLean, William Thomas	Apr. 6, 1952	
*Medford, Ray L.	Jan. 8, 1989	
Meeler, Roy T., Jr.	Dec. 26, 1971	
*Mitchem, Luther C.	Jan. 13, 1980	
*Moore, Kim J.	Dec. 28, 1986	
*Moore, Paul Leonard	Apr. 6, 1952	
Naegle, John E.	Mar. 27, 1859	(May 11, 1867) Deposed
*Osborne, Donald Earl	Jan. 1, 1964	
*Piercy, Ransom Fletcher, Jr.	Jan. 3, 1982	
*Presley, Barbara Bundscho (Mrs. Eric C.)	Dec. 28, 1986	
*Presley, Eric Carroll	Jan. 30, 1977	
Ragan, D. C.	Apr. 4, 1915	June 21, 1928
Ramsaur, Jackson T.	Mar. 31, 1946	June 26, 1956
Rankin, J. Ralph	Apr. 4, 1915	
	Ord. Spokane, Wash.	
Rankin, William G.	May 23, 1886	Feb. 12, 1900
Ratchford, E. Z.	July 26, 1914	
Reid, John R.	Jan. 23, 1881	
Reid, Robert W.	Mar. 27, 1859	

DEACONS

*Rowe, Daniel Neil	Jan. 6, 1991	
*Smith, Gordon Franklin	Dec. 31, 1967	
Smith, Jack	Jan. 13, 1980	
*Smith, Lois McCarter (Mrs. G. Franklin)	Jan. 8, 1978	
*Smith, Ralph Lester	Jan. 7, 1979	
*Stewart, Randal Lawrence	Jan. 5, 1992	
Stiles, Garland	Dec. 31, 1967	
*Stone, Charles Wilton	Apr. 6, 1952	
*Stone, William Charles	Jan. 11, 1981	
Stowe, Charles Mack	Jan. 1, 1958	
*Stowe, Fred Reece, Sr.	Mar. 31, 1946	
*Stowe, Harold Rudolph, Jr.	Dec. 12, 1987	
*Stowe, Harold Rudolph, Sr.	Dec. 19, 1965	
*Stowe, James Bryce, Jr.	Nov. 29, 1959	
Stowe, John Logan	Nov. 22, 1868	Dec. 30, 1905
*Stowe, Jeffrey Wilson	Jan. 5, 1986	
Thomas, Edward Washington	Dec. 11, 1955	June 25, 1984
*Turnipseed, Andrew James	Nov. 13, 1960	
*Via, William S.	Jan. 13, 1985	
*Warren, Lawson Stowe	Jan. 8, 1978	
Warren, Luther	Jan. 13, 1985	
White, David Phillips, Jr.	Dec. 29, 1968	
Wilburn, Ryland	Feb. 12, 1978	
*Williams, Edward Malcolm	Dec. 11, 1955	
*Wilson, Allen Leon	Dec. 26, 1971	
*Wilson, Carol Ms.	Jan. 5, 1992	
Wilson, C. Daniel	Dec. 6, 1987	
Wilson, Todd	Jan. 15, 1967	
*Withers, Jeffrey	Jan. 6, 1991	

*Deacons who are members of the congregation in October, 1992

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

PRESIDENTS

New Hope Ladies' Society

Allie Walker Cochran (Mrs. J.B.) 1908 - 1909

Women's Missionary Society

Blanche Franklin Burwell (Mrs. R. S.)	1910 - 1915
Carrie McKee Hanna (Mrs. John V.)	1915 - 1916
Blanche Franklin Burwell (Mrs. R. S.)	1916 - 1918
Carrie McKee Hanna (Mrs. John V.)	1918 - 1923
Norma Thompson McLauchlin (Mrs. Archie)	1923 - 1925
Sadie Oates Harrison (Mrs. David)	1925 - 1926
Marietta Hanna Ratchford (Mrs. Joseph F.)	1926 - 1930
Ella Mae Martin (Mrs. L. K.)	1930 - 1933
Ida Wallace (Mrs. D. R.)	1933 -
Marietta Hanna Ratchford (Mrs. Joseph F.)	1933 - 1934
Mabel Glenn Lewis (Mrs. William D.)	1934 - 1937

The Woman's Auxiliary

Zoe Ratchford Boyd (Mrs. I. Harris)	1937 - 1939
Mary John Harrison Barrett (Mrs. James Ralph)	1939 - 1943
Nellie Bailey Stowe (Mrs. Fred R., Sr.)	1943 - 1945
Sadie McCoy Elrod (Mrs. T. P.)	1945 - 1946
Bonnie Louise Hale Knight (Mrs. J. H.)	1946 - 1948
Clara Maier Dixon (Mrs. Fred Lee)	1948 - 1950

Women of the Church

Bertha Boyd McLean (Mrs. R. Irvin)	1950 - 1952
Frances Brank Moore (Mrs. Paul)	1952
Mabel Glenn Lewis (Mrs. William D.)	1952 - 1953
Clara Maier Dixon (Mrs. Fred L.)	1953 - 1954
Marion Jordan Horsley (Mrs. Sam)	1954 - 1956

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

PRESIDENTS

Women of the Church (continued)

Betty Huffstetler McLean (Mrs. Joe C.)	1956 - 1958
Zoe Ratchford Boyd (Mrs. I. Harris)	1958 - 1960
Margaret Ritchie McLean (Mrs. William T.)	1960 - 1961
Doris Cash Stowe (Mrs. Charles Mack)	1961 - 1963
Ruth Burwell Kendrick, Miss	1963 - 1964
Nellie Bailey Stowe (Mrs. Fred R., Sr.)	1964 - 1966
Faye Brandon Stone (Mrs. Charles W.)	1966 - 1968
Jessie Moore Dameron (Mrs. W. Grover)	1968 - 1970
Margaret Ritchie McLean (Mrs. William T.)	1970 - 1971
Betty Huffstetler McLean (Mrs. Joe C.)	1971 - 1972
Jane Emery Maske (Mrs. Frank C.)	1972 - 1974
Nellie Bailey Stowe (Mrs. Fred R., Sr.)	1974 - 1976
Anne Cody Wilson (Mrs. Allen L.)	1976 - 1978
Betty Huffstetler McLean (Mrs. Joe C.)	1978 - 1980
Lena Aldridge Warren (Mrs. Lawson S.)	1980 - 1982
Sara Fowler Jackson (Mrs. Robert W.)	1982 - 1984
Katherine Richardson Martin (Mrs. Eugene)	1984 - 1986
Julie Fisher (Mrs. Mark)	1984 - 1986
Gayle Goodrich (Mrs. Joel D.)	1986 - 1988

Moderator of Presbyterian Women

Adele Wilson (Mrs. C. Daniel)	1988 - 1989
Suzanne McLean Enloe, Ms.	1989 - 1990
Mary Eugenia Rollins Piercy (Mrs. R. F.)	1990 - 1991
Judith Hendry Weger (Mrs. Brian D.)	1991 - 1992
Jane Emery Maske (Mrs. Frank C.)	1992 - 1993

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP RECIPIENTS

Norma Thompson McLauchlin (Mrs. Archie)	1948
Sara Stowe Hoffman (Mrs. Daniel Peterson)	1948
Annie Stinson Wright (Mrs. Henry Spate)	1950
Sue Stowe Craig (Mrs. Thomas T.)	1951
Cora Borders Lewis Stowe (Mrs. Hugh)	1952
Mamie Cloninger Stowe (Mrs. John Logan)	1953
Sadie Oates Harrison (Mrs. David A.)	1957
Mabel Glenn Lewis (Mrs. William D.)	1963
Zoe Ratchford Boyd (Mrs. I. Harris)	1965
Ela Dixon Wilson (Mrs. Lyndon G.)	1966
Edith Horsley Lewis (Mrs. Ura Lee, Sr.)	1967
Jessie Moore Dameron (Mrs. William Grover)	1968
Margaret Ritchie McLean (Mrs. William T.)	1971
Betty Huffstetler McLean (Mrs. Joe C.)	1973
Jane Emery Maske (Mrs. Frank C.)	1974
Nellie Bailey Stowe (Mrs. Fred R., Sr.)	1976
Beverly Jordan Lineberger (Mrs. Jack R.)	1977
Anne Cody Wilson (Mrs. Allen)	1978
Lynda Wilson Hancock (Mrs. John H.)	1979
Lena Aldridge Warren (Mrs. Lawson S.)	1980
Alma Nicholas Brong (Mrs. Jason)	1982
Clara Maier Dixon (Mrs. Fred Lee)	1983
Sara Fowler Jackson (Mrs. Robert W.)	1984
Mary John Harrison Barrett (Mrs. James R.)	1985
Betty Taylor Stowe (Mrs. Harold R., Sr.)	1986
Doris Yeargin Elkins (Mrs. John D.)	1987
Louise Roach Brandon (Mrs. J. Leonard)	1989
Ruth Dameron, Miss	1990
Delores Huggins Dixon (Mrs. Archie W.)	1991
Suzanne McLean Enloe, Ms.	1991
Mary Eugenia Rollins Piercy (Mrs. R. F.)	1991
Martha Wright Kendrick (Mrs. Joel)	1992

Servicemen Who Were Members of New Hope
During Their Term of Service

Revolutionary War:

McKee, James

War of 1812:

Gingles, Samuel

Civil War:

Hanna, John Newton

Leeper, Frank

Ratchford, James A.

Reid, R. Holland

Reid, William Harrison

Stowe, G. Pickney

Stowe, James A.

Stowe, J. N.

Stowe, J. Logan

Stowe, W. A.

Stowe, Jacob Cevetus

World War I:

Bradley, Campbell

Capps, Lester Rufus

Clanton, John

Craig, Dewey

Craig, Eldridge Miller

Dickson, Robert Clarence

Dickson, John T.

Featherstone, Ralph

Ford, Lawrence Russell

Glover, Thomas Berry

Glover, George

World War 1 (continued)

Lewis, Irven Tracy

Lewis, Kenneth Reid

Lewis, William Dixon

Ragan, Carlyle

Ratchford, Martin Luther

Wright, George

Wright, John

World War II:

Barrett, James Ralph

Brandon, Charles Henry

Brandon, James L., Sr.

Craig, Samuel Newton

Dameron, John Albert

Dameron, Roy M.

Dameron, William R.

Dixon, Archie Walton

Dixon, Charles Dennis

Dixon, Douglas Neal

Dixon, Henry Mott

Dixon, Holland Ray

Dixon, Robert Earl

(killed in action)

Duren, Dan T.

Duren, Russell S.

Edwards, Elizabeth A.

Featherstone, Coit W.

Ford, Robert Henry

Hamrick, Miles Floyd, Jr.

Harris, William F., Sr.

Harrison, David A.

Harrison, Howard G.

Hoffman, William Egbert

World War II (continued):

Jackson, Thomas Larkin
Kincaid, Gilmour A.
Lewis, Edwin Perry, Sr.
Lewis, Frank Reid
Lewis, John W.
McLean, Joe Cramer
Rankin, William Phillip
Ratchford, Leonard Burwell
Ratchford, Robert Hugh
 (killed in action)
Stowe, Charles Mack
Stowe, John Bryce, Jr.
Stowe, Roy Lewis
Wolfe, Glenn Lee
Wolfe, William Davis, Jr.

Korean Conflict, Vietnam War
Desert Storm:

Dixon, W. Thomas
*Lundquist, Wayne Lionel
*Robinson, James John

*Career Military Personnel

Horsley, Samuel R.

Korean Conflict, Vietnam
War, Desert Storm
(continued):

Adams, Charles F.
Brown, Jimmie Dianne
Craig, James Thomas
Craig, Hugh Sparks
Dameron, Danny Lee
*Harris, Donald Taylor
*Harris, William F. Jr.
Kendrick, Robert W., Jr.
Lewis, Edwin Perry, Jr.
Lundquist, K. Eric
McLean, Randy Erwin
McManus, Donald W.
Reid, William Timothy
*Stowe, Fred R., Jr.
Stowe, James Logan, Jr.
Stowe, Jerry Sigmon
Stowe, Richard Allen





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